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# The Indian Church Commentaries

Edited under the general supervision  
of the Bishops of Lahore & Rangoon

GENERAL EDITOR

The Rev. C. F. Andrews, M.A.

*Cambridge Brotherhood, Delhi*

## THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS



The Indian Church Commentaries

# THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

BY THE REV  
T. WALKER, M.A.

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# GENERAL PREFACE

BY THE

BISHOP OF LAHORE

A FEW words of introduction are necessary to explain the general purpose of this series of Commentaries. The work was commenced under the general supervision of the Bishop of Rangoon and myself, acting as a Committee appointed in accordance with a Resolution of the Synod of Indian Bishops which met in 1900. Subsequently, with the sanction of the Metropolitan, the Rev. C. F. Andrews, of the Cambridge Brotherhood, Delhi, was appointed General Editor. The work of revision before publication is being left mainly in his hands, but a general Episcopal supervision of the work will still be maintained.

It is hoped that these Commentaries, while presenting a direct and scholarly interpretation of the New Testament, based upon the work of the great English Commentators, will, at the same time, contain such references to Eastern religious thought and life as may make them serviceable to both Christian and non-Christian. The series will, in due course, if funds permit, be translated into the leading Indian Vernaculars. It is

inevitable that in the interpretation of the New Testament there will be differences of opinion, and it has seemed best to allow these differences to appear in the series rather than to aim at a colourless uniformity. The final responsibility for the views taken of particular passages will rest with the individual contributors.

The thanks of the Synod Committee are given to the Editors of the Cambridge Bible for Colleges and Schools for their kind permission to quote freely from that Series, and also to the Cambridge University Press and the Delegates of the Oxford University Press for a similar permission to use the text of the English Revised Version in this volume.

G. A. LAHORE.

BISHOPSBOURNE,  
LAHORE.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THIS little book was prepared at the request of the Bishop of Lahore, acting as Convener of a Committee appointed by the Synod of Indian Bishops to arrange for the publication of a series of Commentaries on the Books of the New Testament, specially adapted to the requirements of this country. Its size was determined by the condition that it should not exceed in bulk the corresponding volume in the 'Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges.' This condition precluded the possibility of supplying anything in the shape of full and copious 'Studies,'—calculated to elucidate in detail the spiritual and practical teaching of the Epistle. I have contented myself, therefore, with the briefest references to many of the fascinating subjects suggested by this 'Joy Letter' of the great Apostle, and have endeavoured to confine myself to the task of explaining the meaning of the text as tersely as possible.

As the notes will show, free use has been made of the well known Commentaries of Bishops Lightfoot and Moule, and occasional reference has been made, also, to Conybeare and Howson's 'Life and Epistles of St. Paul.' But, as readers will see for themselves, the book is far from being a mere compilation.

Special attention has been paid to the New Testament usage of all remarkable words and expressions which occur in the Epistle, and the parallel passages have been collated so as to provide material for addresses and Bible readings.

I have to express my great indebtedness to the Rev. C. F. Andrews, of the Cambridge Delhi Mission, who has kindly read through the proof sheets and made sundry suggestions, which, in almost every case, I have felt able to adopt readily and gladly.

The little volume is now issued in the earnest hope that the God of Truth may make use of it to throw light, for Indian readers, on the meaning of those inspired words which are 'spirit and life' to those who rightly apprehend them.

T. WALKER.

TINNEVELLY, *July*, 1906.

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# CONTENTS



	PAGE
INTRODUCTION .. .. .	
SECTION I. PHILIPPI .. .. .	xi
„ II. ST. PAUL AND THE PHILIPPIAN CHURCH .. .. .	xiv
„ III. DATE AND OCCASION OF THE EPISTLE .. .. .	xvii
„ IV. AUTHENTICITY OF THE EPISTLE ..	xxiii
„ V. THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF THIS EPISTLE .. .. .	xxv
„ VI. CHARACTER AND CONTENTS OF THE EPISTLE .. .. .	xxviii
„ VII. LESSONS OF THE EPISTLE FOR THE INDIAN CHURCH ..	xxxiv
„ VIII. OUTLINE TOPICAL STUDIES OF THE EPISTLE .. .. .	xlili
TEXT AND NOTES .. .. .	i



# INTRODUCTION

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## I. PHILIPPI

THE town of Philippi, now only a scene of ruins, has played a not unimportant part both in secular and sacred history. In its neighbourhood were famous gold and silver mines, worked, in early times, by the industrious Phœnicians, and yielding, even as late as the days of Philip, King of Macedonia, ten thousand talents yearly. Passing through its very midst, and dividing it into a 'higher' and a 'lower' town, was the great *Egnatian Road*, extending for a distance of 500 miles from the Hebrus in Thrace to Dyrrhachium on the Adriatic, from which town Italy was reached by what has been admirably designated a sort of 'tumultuous ferry;' the whole forming a mighty thoroughfare which Cicero described, in no mere figure of speech, as 'that military way of ours which connects us with the Hellespont' (*De Prov. Cons.* ii). Here, too, is the beautiful plain, renowned for its fertility, where the last battle was lost by the republicans of Rome (42 B.C.), led by their generals, Brutus and Cassius, who strove in vain against the armies of Octavius (Augustus) and Marcus Antonius (Antony). And, above all, this was the place in which the great Apostle of the Gentiles was led by God to first plant the standard of the Gospel on European soil. Who can tell how much England and India, aye! and the whole world of men, owe to this town near the head of the Ægean Sea as St. Paul's first Missionary centre in the evangelization of the West?

**1. Its geographical position.**—Philippi lay on the great Egnatian thoroughfare, just at the spot where the almost continuous mountain barrier (of the Balkans) between the East and West sinks into a pass, forming, as it were, a natural gateway for easy communication between two continents. It was thus, in the fullest sense, a key-position, and its strategical importance had been recognized and utilized alike by Philip of Macedon and Augustus of Rome. Was it without reason, therefore, that the Spirit of God directed thither the footsteps of the prince of Missionaries? If the Gospel were to cross the Balkans, here was the readiest way of access. As Bishop Lightfoot has well expressed it, ‘We are standing at the confluence of the streams of European and Asiatic life; we see reflected in the evangelization of Philippi, as in a mirror, the history of the passage of Christianity from the East to the West.’ We may say, in fact, *mutatis mutandis*, that Philippi, with the Egnatian Road, was to the first Missionaries what the Suez Canal is to the Missionary of the twentieth century, a channel of communication between Europe and Asia.

**2. Its name.**—The town was named after its founder, Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, who built it with the double object of commemorating the addition of a new province to his dominions and raising a frontier-garrison to protect his kingdom against the mountaineers of Thrace. It was placed hard by the site of the ancient Crenides, ‘the Place of Fountains,’ so called from the numerous streams abounding in the neighbourhood. Of these, the most important is the little river Gangites (a tributary of the Strymon), which flowed a mile or so west of the town.

**3. Its importance as a Roman Colony.**—Augustus, prompted, doubtless, by the desire to perpetuate the memory of his decisive victory over Brutus, added further to the dignity of Philippi by making it a Roman Colony, with the

proud and high-sounding title *Colonia Augusta Julia Philippensis*. It thus became, in every sense of the term, an out-lying post of the Roman Empire, bearing a miniature resemblance to the Imperial City. When such a Colony was founded, the colonists were wont to march to their destination with colours flying, in military array, and to mark out their new possession with the plough; their names were still enrolled in the annals of Rome; the language used, the coinage current, the laws in vogue, all alike were Latin; the very Magistrates arrogated to themselves titles of dignity borrowed from statelier functions in the Fatherland. Every such Colony was like a lesser Rome, transplanted bodily into some far-off district of the Empire.

Philippi had, moreover, been gifted with the 'Jus Italicum,' by virtue of which it enjoyed immunity from the ground-tax which was levied by the Romans on all provincial lands, and was raised to the same level of dignity as the sacred soil of Italy itself. Its inhabitants could pride themselves on the full possession of the three great privileges of Roman citizens, exemption from scourging, freedom from arrest (except in certain cases), and the right of direct appeal to Cæsar. Some of them had never seen that glorious mother-city which was the 'mistress of the world'; but, as they turned their faces westward, and travelled in imagination over the blue waters of the Adriatic Sea, their breasts might well glow with pride as they realized that they were members of such a Commonwealth, free of its rights, sharers in its glory.

St. Paul makes good use of the peculiar position of Philippi as a Colony in the teaching of the Epistle, and, as we study it, we shall do well to bear in mind the facts which have thus been briefly mentioned. The Christian, whose Commonwealth is in heaven, and who is 'a citizen of no mean city,' while 'holding the fort' for Christ in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, may well find his

position illustrated by the circumstances of the Philippian colonists whose duty it was to uphold the honour of the Empire among barbarians and alien tribes on the distant confines of the State. The Indian Christian, in particular, with countless Hindus and Muhammadans pressing round him on every side, may learn from this Epistle his duties as well as his privileges in calling himself 'a citizen of heaven.'

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## II. ST. PAUL AND THE PHILIPPIAN CHURCH

St. Paul's first visit to Philippi, as recorded in Acts xvi, was paid about the year<sup>1</sup> A.D. 52, during the course of his second Missionary journey. His companions on that occasion were Silas, Timotheus, and, as we infer from Acts xvi. 10, 12 (compared with xx. 6), the beloved physician, Luke. Embarking at Troas, they made a quick voyage to Neapolis, favoured by wind and wave. After landing at Neapolis, a town which is probably identical with the modern Turkish village Cavallo, they lost no time in pressing forward along the great Egnatian Road which leads over a mountain ridge towards Philippi. When the descent on the further side began, and the lovely sea view on the south had now been lost to view, they would see stretched out before them the fair and fertile plain where lay the objective of their present journey, 'the first city of Macedonia' (so we understand Acts xvi. 12) to be reached along that pathway. The Jews in Philippi appear to have been few in number, possibly owing to the colonial and military character of the place. St. Paul found no synagogue, as in Antioch, Iconium, and elsewhere, in which to give his message, but

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<sup>1</sup> The ordinary chronology is used in this book. The first visit to Philippi was, more probably, towards the close of A.D. 50. Some place it even earlier.

was obliged to seek out, on the Sabbath Day, the little company who met for worship in their humble 'proseucha,' or prayerhouse, on the banks of the Gangites, outside the city. The narrative in the Acts affords us a graphic view of the events which transpired during this first visit of the great Apostle, and of the three typical conversions which then took place, first that of Lydia the merchant, then that of the sooth-saying slave girl, and, lastly that of the Roman jailer, a subordinate officer under Government. Bishop Lightfoot has pointed out that these three first converts 'stand in marked contrast each to the other in national descent, in social rank, in religious education,' and that 'the order of their conversions is significant, first the proselyte, next the Greek, and, lastly, the Roman,' symbolizing the order of the progress of Christianity throughout the world.

The visit was brought to an abrupt conclusion by a fierce storm of persecution, followed by a miraculous deliverance. This opposition to the Gospel seems to have continued after the Apostle had passed on his way to Thessalonica, and the Philippian converts came in for their full share of conflict and affliction (2 Cor. viii. 2; Phil. i. 7, 28-30). On his departure, St. Paul appears to have left behind him in the city his friend and companion Luke (Acts xvii. 1, 4, 1st person dropped in narration) and possibly also Timothy, who may have continued to labour there for a longer or shorter period. Later, in<sup>1</sup> the year 57, we find the Apostle despatching Timotheus and Erastus into Macedonia (Acts xix. 22), and, beyond doubt, Philippi must have shared in the objects of their mission. We may be quite sure, also, that the Philippian Christians, with their warm affection, were not slack in responding, along with other Macedonian congregations (2 Cor. viii. 1-5), to the appeal of their beloved leader for liberal help for the needy brethren in Judæa.

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<sup>1</sup> Or, according to a more probable chronology, the year A.D. 55.

In the autumn of A.D. 57,<sup>1</sup> after an absence of five years, St. Paul himself set out from Ephesus to re-visit his European Churches (Acts xx. 1; 2 Cor. ii. 12, 13; vii. 5, 6), and, beyond question, the Philippian profited by his loving ministrations. A very short interval of time saw him once more among them, when, in the spring of 58,<sup>2</sup> on his way from Corinth, he tarried to keep the Paschal Feast with his faithful converts (Acts xx. 6). From this time we completely lose sight of the Philippian Christians till we see them, still loyal to the core, sending Epaphroditus with their free-will offerings to succour St. Paul in his Roman prison (Phil. ii. 25, 30; iv. 10-18). It was by the hand of this trusty messenger that the Apostle sent his Epistle, breathing, as it does in every page, the strongest personal affection. We gather from its contents that it was his formed and fixed intention not only to send them Timothy as a helper of their faith, but also to visit them himself, once more, in person (ch. ii. 19, 24). Did this prospective visit ever take place? The historical references contained in 1 Tim. i. 3; 2 Tim. iv. 13, 20 would seem to answer that question in the affirmative, and to indicate at least one such visit in the interval between St. Paul's first and second Roman captivities.

Enough however has been said to show that his relationships with the Philippian Christians were of the closest and most cordial character, and were constantly maintained. Never did he cease to love and pray for them; never did they fail to show their loyalty and gratitude to him.

The after history of this Church is quickly told. On his way from Asia to martyrdom in Rome, Ignatius passed Philippi. He was there courteously received and honoured by the Christians. This memorable visit led to the opening of friendly communications between them and Polycarp, the

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<sup>1</sup> More probably, in the spring of A.D. 56.

<sup>2</sup> Or, more probably, 57.



friend of Ignatius and Bishop of Smyrna, to whom they applied for advice and exhortation. Polycarp's response to their appeal was his famous Epistle (the only one of his extant). In this, he strikes the note of joy,—joy in the Lord; he urges them to holiness of life, emphasizing faith and love and hope; he warns them solemnly against the love of money; he gives instructions as to the seemly conduct of wives, deacons, and presbyters; he bids all alike to 'play the citizen' for God; he insists strongly on loyalty to the one true Gospel, and points them to the holy example of those who have trodden the way of righteousness and reached their heavenly home; he exhorts them to steadfastness, humility, liberality, sobriety, while, at the same time, he has to grieve over the fall, apparently from avarice, of Valens, once a presbyter among them; finally, he commits them to God and to His Word, and bids them pray for all men.

With this letter, the Philippian Church practically disappears from view. Save for a chance allusion to it by Tertullian and others, and the occasional occurrence of the name of one or other of its bishops in the records of ecclesiastical Councils, we know really nothing of its later history. Beginning with the brightest promise, its glory soon began to dim, and has long ago faded into darkness. It affords a standing warning to our Indian congregations to beware of swerving from the path of truth and love and Missionary zeal. Let us be thankful, however, that the fruits of its pristine faith and love remain, and the Epistle which was written to stimulate and nourish them.

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### III. DATE AND OCCASION OF THE EPISTLE

**1. The place of writing.**—The Epistle was undoubtedly written from Rome, during the two years' captivity recorded by St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles (xxviii. 30). This

means that it must be dated within the years A.D. 61-3.<sup>1</sup> Although a few critics, of whom Meyer is chief, have assigned the writing of the Epistle to the period of the Apostle's imprisonment in Cæsarea (Acts xxiv. 23-7), their arguments will fail to convince all those who ponder carefully the following facts:—

(1) The reference to 'Cæsar's household' (Phil. iv. 22) applies naturally to Rome, but cannot, without unfair forcing, be adapted to Cæsarea.

(2) St. Paul's joyful account of the progress of the Gospel (Phil. i. 13-18) is in point if he is speaking of Rome, a city of the first importance and a comparatively new field for evangelistic work; but it would hardly be applicable to Cæsarea, a place of no very great renown and one which had already been well evangelized by others (Acts. x. 1-48; xxi. 8-16).

(3) The Apostle, in this Epistle, anticipates a speedy release and contemplates a visit to Macedonia (i. 26; ii. 24; cf. Philemon 22). At Cæsarea, on the other hand, his expectation was to visit Rome, as a prisoner who had appealed to Cæsar (Acts xxv. 11, 12).

(4) The mention of the Prætorium (i. 13), which might at first sight seem to favour the arguments for Cæsarea (Acts xxiii. 35, Herod's Prætorium), also fixes Rome as the place of writing, for the real Prætorium,<sup>2</sup> the Body of the Imperial Guards, was located in that city, and this alone fulfils all the requirements of the case.

We conclude, therefore, with the vast majority of scholars, that our Epistle was penned by the Apostle during his first captivity in Rome.

**2. The Date.**—Quite a war of controversy has raged round the question of the date of this Epistle. Is it to be assigned

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<sup>1</sup> Or, more probably, 60-62.

<sup>2</sup> But see foot-note on chapter I, verse 13.

to an early, or a later, period in the Apostle's first Roman imprisonment? Was it written before or after the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians? On the whole, it seems fairest to the reader to present in some detail the arguments for and against a later date for the Epistle.

(1) The fact indicated in the Epistle that the Gospel had already made rapid headway in Rome requires (i. 12-14), we are told, as late a date as possible for its writing and despatch.

To this it is replied that St. Paul found a large and flourishing church already existing when he first arrived in Rome. So considerable was the Christian community there that he had felt it needful, about three years previously, to address the longest of all his Epistles to it. Moreover, the language of joyous hope used in this Epistle as to the progress of the Gospel must not be unduly pressed, since it only indicates a new and vigorous evangelistic work on the part of the Roman Christians; and this, it is urged, would be more likely to have been set on foot soon after his arrival in their midst, before the fresh stimulus of his presence had lost its novelty.

(2) It is claimed that the Epistle wears an aspect of gloom and anxiety, suggestive of rigorous imprisonment and impending danger, and that this forbids the possibility of its having been written before quite the conclusion of the two years of comparative freedom indicated by St. Luke (Acts xxviii. 16 and 30, 31). This argument is further supported by references to contemporaneous history. Burrus, the mild and virtuous Præfect of the Prætorian Guards, was succeeded in A.D. 62 by Fenius Rufus and Tigellinus, the latter of whom was notoriously wicked. Poppæa, too, who had become a proselyte to Judaism, was now the Emperor's consort, and this infamous woman would naturally exert her influence on behalf of the Jews and against the Apostle Paul. Such circumstances would be sure to lead to a darkening of his prospects such as is hinted at in certain verses of the Epistle.

To meet this argument, we must bear in mind that St. Luke, the historian, has given only the briefest possible epitome of the history of the two years in question, and one by no means inconsistent with the general tenor of the Epistle; whereas St. Paul, the letter writer, naturally gives expression to the alternations of feeling consequent upon the varying experiences of each day. Moreover, so far from the Epistle being really gloomy, it is marked, on the whole, by the characteristic of overflowing joy. The very burden of its message is 'Rejoice in the Lord.' The word 'joy', as we shall have occasion to see, is the keynote running through its every chapter. It is improbable, too, that political changes in the Imperial Court would make much difference in the condition of an obscure provincial prisoner, the champion of a cult not yet sufficiently prominent to be regarded as dangerous to the State.

(3) Stress is laid, though this argument is entirely inconsistent with the one preceding, on the fact that, in this Epistle, the Apostle appears to be expecting the immediate decision of his cause and to be looking forward to a speedy deliverance (i. 19, 25; ii. 24).

But this can hardly be regarded as, in itself, conclusive. During his two years' confinement he must often have expected his trial to come on, and a Roman prisoner, under such circumstances, would experience many hopes and disappointments. Furthermore, the expressions in question are no stronger than similar ones in his Epistle to Philemon (22), and must not, therefore, be unduly pressed in the present instance.

(4) It is argued, again, that the notices contained in the Epistle of numerous communications between St. Paul and Philippi, after his arrival at the capital, and the circumstances of Epaphroditus' visit, demand the lapse of a considerable period of time.

The answer to this is that, at the very most, two journeys from Rome to Philippi, and two from Philippi to Rome, are

required. We may allow time for tidings of the Apostle's arrival in the City to reach the Philippians; we may allow a further period for their contributions to reach St. Paul by the hand of Epaphroditus (ii. 25; iv. 18); and we may suppose that a messenger from Rome arrived at Philippi with tidings of their friend's illness (ii. 26), and that a return messenger brought him news of their present anxiety (ii. 26). Now a month would ordinarily be sufficient for a single journey between the two places, as careful calculation shows; and so, even granting that four journeys actually took place, the conditions of the case only require a lapse of four months or so after the Apostle's arrival in Rome before the despatch of the Epistle. We must note, however, that the four journeys thus postulated may possibly be reduced to two, since the Philippians may have heard beforehand that the Apostle was on his way as a prisoner to Rome, and Epaphroditus may have then started off with their contributions in time to meet him on his arrival there. But be this as it may, in any case some months must have elapsed in Rome before St. Paul wrote the Epistle, and, as we have seen, this would afford ample time for any journeys to and fro involved by the conditions of the case.

(5) Lastly, it is urged that, inasmuch as Luke and Aristarchus accompanied St. Paul on his voyage to the City (Acts xxvii. 2), and join him in his salutations to the Colossian Christians and Philemon (Col. iv. 10, 14; Philemon 24), whereas their names are absent from the Epistle to the Philippians, this last-mentioned letter must have been written at a later date than the other two, these two companions, in the meantime, having departed from Rome.

The advocates of an earlier date for the Epistle meet this argument by the following considerations:—

- (a) An argument from silence is always too precarious to be conclusive in itself. In the Epistle to the Ephesians no mention occurs either of Aristarchus,

Luke, or Timothy, though it was written confessedly at the same time as Colossians and Philemon.

- (b) The two companions in question may possibly be included in the general salutations of ch. iv. 21, 22.
- (c) But, not improbably, Aristarchus, being a Thessalonian (Acts xxvii. 2, 5, 6), may have left St. Paul at Myra, when the latter was transferred into an Alexandrian vessel, and so have continued his journey homewards, rejoining the Apostle in Rome at a later period. If so, the argument under consideration makes for the earlier date of the Epistle, which may have been written before Aristarchus arrived in Rome at all.
- (d) And, again, St. Luke may have been despatched on some temporary mission from Rome, similar to the one contemplated for Timothy (ii. 13-21), and so have been absent when the Epistle was written.

On the whole then it would seem that the balance of evidence is in favour of the earlier date for the Epistle, so ably advocated by Bishop Lightfoot, though it must be confessed that the arguments on the other side are not wholly devoid of force. In support of this view it should be mentioned also that a careful comparison of the style and matter of the Epistles of the first captivity with the 'great central group' of Pauline letters (Corinthians, Galatians, Romans) on the one hand, and the Pastoral Epistles on the other, reveals the fact that the Epistle to the Philippians has closer affinities with the preceding group, especially with Romans the latest of that group, than either Ephesians or Colossians, while these, on the contrary, look onward distinctly to the Pastoral Epistles. So many and so close are the parallels between Romans and Philippians, that we can scarcely avoid the conclusion that the latter Epistle is a connecting link between the letters of the third Apostolic journey and those addressed to the Colossians and Ephesians.

This consideration, following on the balance of evidence given above, seems conclusive as to the earlier date of the Epistle.

We are thus enabled to assign it, with the strongest probability, *to the end of the year A.D. 61 or the beginning of the year 62.*<sup>1</sup>

3. **The Occasion.**—Concerning this, happily, there is no room for doubt. The contents of the Epistle are decisive on the point. Epaphroditus had conveyed in person to the Apostle the liberal gifts of the Philippian converts (ii. 25; iv. 18). His disregard of his own health, in his anxiety to be of service to St. Paul, had brought on a dangerous illness, from which he had only just recovered (ii. 27-30). He was most anxious to return without delay to Philippi, to remove the distress which had been occasioned there by the tidings of his sickness (ii. 26). The Apostle, therefore, guided undoubtedly by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and influenced partly by news which had reached him of misunderstandings rife among certain of the Philippian Christians (i. 27; ii. 2, 3, 14; iv. 2), took the opportunity thus afforded for sending a letter to them by the hand of Epaphroditus, a letter fragrant with his love for them and his fervent desire for their spiritual welfare. It is to this concurrence of circumstances, in the Providence of God, that we owe the Epistle to the Philippians.

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#### IV. AUTHENTICITY OF THE EPISTLE.

1. **Internal Evidence.**—It is difficult to imagine how any careful student of the Epistle can rise from its perusal with the slightest doubt as to its genuineness. It contains such a natural and spontaneous outpouring of the deepest feelings

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<sup>1</sup> Or, on a revised chronology, the end of the year A.D. 60 or the beginning of the year A.D. 61.

of the Apostle's heart, and is such a true reflection of his mind and character as we know them from his unquestioned history, that the very suggestion of forgery or artificial creation seems wilfully absurd. No motive, besides, can possibly be assigned, on the hypothesis of invention, for the production of the Epistle. We can hardly take seriously, therefore, the efforts of Baur and others to prove it to be a fabrication of the second century, especially since their criticisms have been rejected as spurious even by such rationalizing scholars as Hilgenfeld, Pfleiderer, Renan, and Wittichen. It will be well to state in brief, however, the historical proofs of the authenticity of the Epistle.

**2. External Evidence.**—Clement of Rome (end of cent. 1), to take the Apostolic Fathers first,—uses phrases which seem to be reflexions of Phil. i. 10, 27; ii. 5, 15; iv. 15; etc., and which make it highly probable that he was acquainted with the Epistle.

Ignatius, on his way to martyrdom (about A.D. 110), wrote several letters in which apparent allusions to the Epistle occur. To the Romans (ch. ii) he expresses a desire 'to be poured out as a libation to God' (cf. Phil. ii. 17). He bids the Philadelphians (ch. viii) 'do nothing from party-spirit' (Phil. ii. 3). He tells the Smyrnaeans (ch. iv) 'I endure all things, while He, the Perfect One, strengthens me' (Phil. iv. 13), and, again, he exhorts them (ch. xi) 'being perfect, be ye also perfectly minded' (Phil. iii. 15).

Polycarp (early cent. 2) in his letter to the Philippians (chs. iii and xi) makes direct mention of St. Paul having written to them, and, in various passages, echoes the language of the Epistle. For example, he says (ch. i) 'I rejoiced greatly with you in the Lord' (cf. Phil. iv. 10); again (ch. ii) 'to whom all things in heaven and earth are subjected' (Phil. ii. 10); once more (ch. v) 'if we live as citizens worthy of Him' (Phil. i. 27); and again (ch. xii) 'the enemies of the Cross' (Phil. iii. 18); besides other passages.



The *Epistle to Diognetus* (about A.D. 117) has the phrase 'Their citizenship is in heaven' (Phil. iii. 20).

Justin Martyr, Melito, and Theophilus (all of cent. 2), also adopt expressions from this Epistle.

The *Epistle of the Churches of Vienne and Lyons* (A.D. 177) contains Phil. ii. 6, 'Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God.'

The Ancient Versions, including the oldest Syriac, all include this Epistle, as do also the various *Canons of Scripture* of the second century.

Irenæus (late cent. 2) quotes Phil. iv. 18 as the words of 'Paul to the Philippians.'

Clement of Alexandria (late cent. 2) more than once quotes the Epistle as the 'words of the Apostle.'

Tertullian (cent. 2-3) quotes Phil. iii. 11-13 as 'written by Paul to the Philippians'; mentions Philippi as a Church possessing 'authentic Apostolic Epistles'; and, replying to Marcion, refers directly to Phil. i. 14-18; ii. 6-8; iii. 5-9, 20, 21. He tells us also that the Epistle had been read in the Philippian Church right up to his own time.

In fact, no shadow of doubt about the authenticity of the Epistle is to be found in the whole range of early Christian literature.

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## V. THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF THIS EPISTLE.

It is natural and necessary that the student of the Life and Teaching of Christ should base his knowledge of it first and foremost upon the four Gospels; and among non-Christians especially, but also among Christians, there are few who read the Epistles of the New Testament with any view to their bearing on the Gospel history. If, however, we consider that the Gospels, as we have them, were not yet written when most of the Epistles of St. Paul were penned, it is obvious

that the testimony given by the Epistles regarding the Life and Teaching of Jesus is a valuable and essential element in the historical evidence of what He said and did.

Broadly speaking, we may say that the four Gospels are regular treatises in which the writers set themselves to give an account to the Church and the world of the Life and sayings of Christ; while the book of the Acts of the Apostles is a well-arranged narrative of the continuance of His work by His disciples. The Epistles, on the other hand, were *Gelegenheits Schriften*, i.e., writings called forth by some special occasion, and intended to meet the needs of some particular church at a particular time, as we have already seen in the case of this Epistle. If, then, the incidental testimony given by these occasional writings agrees with that of the Gospels and Acts as set treatises, the historical value of both is greatly confirmed. The agreement of this Epistle with the Acts is sufficiently brought out in the Introduction and Exposition, but some words as to its relation to the Gospels may not be useless.

We have here a letter of St. Paul written about the year A.D. 62 (see Introd. III). The Crucifixion and Resurrection of our Saviour took place about the year A.D. 30.<sup>1</sup> Between the two, therefore, barely the space of a generation had elapsed, and there were many persons living who had personal

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<sup>1</sup> The reader must remember that the year of our Lord's birth (A.D.), in current usage, has been fixed four years or so too late. This is owing to a mistake made by the Chronologist known as Dionysius Exiguus (died *circ.* A.D. 536) who calculated the date of the birth of Christ as the year 753 from the founding of the city of Rome. But our Saviour's birth must have taken place some time before the death of Herod the Great, which happened in the year 750 after the foundation of Rome. When this error was discovered the era computed by Dionysius Exiguus had passed into common use, and could not conveniently be changed. In saying, therefore, that the Crucifixion took place in the year A.D. 30, we have to remember that this was really about thirty-four years after the actual birth of Christ.

knowledge of the facts and sayings recorded in the Gospels or who had heard them at first hand from personal witnesses of the events. Supposing that we had only this one literary record of the teaching of the Gospel<sup>1</sup> in the first century A.D. by its chief preacher, how far could we reconstruct the Gospel<sup>1</sup> history and teaching, and what points of contact would this show with the records known as the four Gospels?

To take first the great facts of the *Life* of Christ, the otherwise uninstructed reader would learn that before His birth in the world He had existed in the form of God and as equal with God (ii. 6; cf. John i. 1-3, 15, 18; xiii. 1, 3; xvii. 5); that He had voluntarily surrendered the exercise of this Divine prerogative and assumed human nature (Phil. ii. 7; John i. 14); that He suffered and died on the Cross (Phil. iii. 10; ii. 8); that He rose again from the dead and was exalted to heaven with a real, but glorified body (iii. 10, 21; ii. 9); that He has authority over all things (iii. 21; cf. Mat. xi. 27; xxviii. 18), and can rightly claim the title of Lord (ii. 11; John xiii. 13); and that He will come again as Saviour and Judge (iii. 20; i. 6; cf. Mat. xvi. 27; Luke xxi. 27-8). As regards the *Teaching* of Jesus the reader would note at the outset that St. Paul regarded himself as His bond slave (i. 1), owing Him absolute allegiance to the exclusion of all else (cf. Mat. x. 37; Lu. xiv.

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<sup>1</sup> In studying the Pauline Epistles (and indeed the New Testament generally) it is important for the Indian reader to bear in mind the two-fold meaning of the word 'Gospel'. Originally, as used in the New Testament itself, it signified only the message proclaimed by Christ and his Apostles as being the 'good news' of God's salvation. When the written records of Christ's life became recognized in the Church, they received the name of 'Gospel', as embodying the good news. And we may add, when Muhammad, with his imperfect knowledge of the Christian religion, wished to designate the New Testament as a whole, he employed the name of the four most prominent books and called it 'Injil'. Nor was he quite wide of the mark, for all the books of the New Testament have for their subject the 'good news of salvation'.

26); that to suffer for Christ is the greatest of privileges (Lu. vi. 22-3; Mark viii. 35; cf. Phil. i. 29; iii. 7); to follow His example the highest ideal (John xiii. 14; Phil. ii. 5); that God our Father gives all needful gifts to his children who ask Him (Phil. iv. 6; Mat. vii. 7-11); especially His Holy Spirit (Phil. i. 19; Lu. xi. 13); and that only in the Spirit can He be worshipped acceptably (Phil. iii. 3; John iv. 23-4); that the Christian life is the result of being taken hold of by God (Phil. iii. 12; John vi. 44), yet necessarily implies the most strenuous effort on the part of man, lest its fruit be lost (Lu. xiii. 24; Phil. ii. 12, 13; iii. 13, 14): that it is the duty of the Christian to spread his faith (Phil. i. 27; Mat. xxviii. 19), while yet he is to beware of dealings with the morally unclean or dogs (iii. 2; Mat. vii. 6); that his reward here and hereafter is to gain Christ and be with Him (iii. 8; i. 23; cf. Lu. xxiii. 43; Mat. xxv. 34); and that those who are enrolled among God's people (Phil. iv. 3; Lu. x. 20) must now evince the fact by their mutual love (Phil. ii. 2; John xiii. 35), while they continually enjoy His peace in Christ (Phil. iv. 7, 9; John xiv. 27).

Such are the main points of direct contact with the Gospel record, (not of course in the way of quotation, but of explicit agreement), in this brief Epistle. How much they are amplified and increased in the other Pauline Epistles a careful comparison will easily show.

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## VI. CHARACTER AND CONTENTS OF THE EPISTLE

An attentive reading of the Epistle will readily reveal its leading characteristics. Its messages are clear and plain; its salient features are well-defined, and unmistakeable.

1. **It is non-controversial in character.**—No necessity existed, as in the case of the Galatian and Corinthian Churches,

for St. Paul to maintain and defend, against theological opponents, his Apostolical authority. The Philippian Christians had proved unswerving in their loyalty to the Missionary who had led their feet into the way of life and peace. They were bound to him by no common ties of love and gratitude. Again and again they had shown their firm attachment to him by ministering to his necessities (iv. 10-18). He was able to dispense, therefore, in addressing them, with the title of 'Apostle' (i. 1; contrast Rom. i. 1; 1 Cor. i. 1; 2 Cor. i. 1; Gal. i. 1), and to talk with them heart to heart, as a friend with friends.

No serious errors in doctrine, moreover, had arisen in the Philippian congregation to confuse their minds and to cause alarm to the Apostle. They were adhering firmly to 'the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.' In this, the Epistle differs from that written to the Colossians from the same Roman prison, as well as from those previously sent to the Romans, Galatians, and Corinthians. It is true that, in the third chapter, he strikes a note of solemn warning against Judaism on the one hand and Antinomianism on the other; but we have no reason to suppose that either of these errors was specially rife among them. It may be that, with a true instinct, he recognized the first appearance of the noxious weeds and hastened to pluck them up forthwith; or it is possible that the word of admonition was suggested by circumstances external to themselves, not improbably by the state of things around him in Rome itself (Phil. i. 15-17; Rom. vi. 1, 2). No sharp rebukes of error were required by these beloved converts. No loud and alarming blasts of controversial argument disturb the calm and joyous peace of this Apostolic message.

2. **It overflows with personal affection.**—The great Apostle is full of thankfulness for the faith of his Philippian friends (i. 3). He is constant and joyful in his prayers for them (i. 4). He longs over them all with a strong and

home-sick longing (*ἐπιποθέω*) in the heart of Jesus Christ (i. 8). While his personal inclination would make him wish 'to depart and be with Christ which is very far better', yet for their sakes he is joyfully ready to forego the tempting prospect, and to remain in scenes of trial and affliction to be of further service to them (i. 23-26). How gladly, should the need arise, would he pour out his life for them! (ii. 17). So great and tender is his loving care for them that he will gladly deny himself one of his truest comforts and spare Epaphroditus to return to them (ii. 25-30); aye! and even Timothy his own dear son in Christ (ii. 19-23). He would have them know the wealth of gladness which their loving thought and gifts have brought him (iv. 10-18), gifts as fragrant as the sweetest odours, because the outbreathing of their true affection.

The whole Epistle, in short, is the unique and spontaneous overflowing of a great heart glowing with holy love.

3. **It is a pastoral on Christian unity.**—One flaw threatened to sully the fair beauty of the Philippian Church. A 'root of bitterness' was springing up and many were in real danger of being defiled. A spirit of strife was appearing in the congregation, born, most probably, of personal rivalries. Two ladies in particular, Euodia and Syntyche, are singled out in the Epistle as being ringleaders in these unfortunate disputes (iv. 2).

The evil has not yet grown to large dimensions, and the Apostle hastens to lay his finger on the sore in the earnest hope of healing it. With a rare delicacy he indicates the danger, and with all the strong tenderness of his sympathetic nature begs them to avoid dissensions and to cultivate the closest Christian unity. As for himself, he loves them *all* (i. 1, 4, 7, 8). Let them, for their part, 'stand fast in one Spirit' and strive shoulder to shoulder for the faith of the Gospel (i. 27). If they would gladden his heart, let them put away every form of party spirit (*ἐριθεία*) and vainglory, and be

of one mind together in the unity of the Holy Ghost (ii. 1-4). He bids them display, in all things, 'the mind of Christ', the mind of self-abnegation, of self-abasement, of true humility (ii. 5-8). He calls on them to put away all 'murmurings and disputings' and to shine, with no dim or uncertain light, as God's luminaries in the world (ii. 14, 15). Let the ladies who had been the cause of strife be reconciled (iv. 2, 3). Let a spirit of unselfish 'yieldingness' (ἐπεικεῖς) replace their rivalries (iv. 5). So shall the Church enjoy God's joy and peace and power (iv. 4-13).

#### 4. It is studded with special words and thoughts.

—Certain keywords and striking topics will be found to characterize the Epistle. The truths indicated by such keywords flash forth like diamonds from a golden setting and add beauty to the whole. They also suggest lines of thought and methods of treatment most helpful to the student. (For examples, see VIII).

(1) *It is an Epistle full of Christ.* The word *Christ* occurs no less than thirty-seven times. It stands out clear and prominent in every chapter. Bishop Lightfoot has well remarked that this Epistle 'recalls us from theological and ecclesiastical distractions to the very heart and centre of the Gospel, the life of Christ and the life in Christ.' Its Christology is a study in itself, and one which will richly repay the careful student. Our *relationship to Christ*, as His servants, saints, prisoners, confessors; our *possession in Christ*, grace, peace, comfort, joy, knowledge, righteousness, strength, riches, 'the supply of the Spirit'; our *responsibility to Christ*, to bring forth fruit, to preach Him, to magnify Him, to 'live' Him, to suffer for Him, to manifest His 'mind', to do His work, to carry His cross, to wait for His appearing; these, and countless other truths, will become luminous before us in the light of such a study. We shall rise from it strengthened for our walk and warfare, resolved to be, like the Epistle itself,

all for Christ, full of Christ, permeated with Christ through and through.

(2) *It is an Epistle full of joy.* The keynote of 'joy' is struck again and again. The word *joy* or *rejoice* is found sixteen times in this one short letter (i. 4, 18, 18, 25; ii. 2, 17, 17, 18, 18, 28, 29; iii. 1; iv. 1, 4, 4, 10). It greets us in every chapter; it confronts us at every turn. 'Rejoice in the Lord', this is the burden of the Apostle's message to his Philippian converts, and this is the Holy Spirit's message to ourselves. A strange greeting, truly, to come from a place of captivity; at a time, too, when danger-clouds seemed gathering overhead. But, as some one has well expressed it, 'God's birds can sing even in darkened cages', and so it has come to pass that what is perhaps the sweetest joy-song in inspired Writ issued from a Roman prison. Let us learn, like our Epistle, to be full of joy, sacred joy, the very joy of God.

(3) *It is an Epistle full of holy-mindedness.* The word *φρονεῖν* occurs ten times in all (i. 7; ii. 2, 2, 5; iii. 15, 15, 19; iv. 2, 10, 10; omitting it in iii. 16, according to the best MSS.) It denotes the action of the *φρένες*, which include the heart and will, as well the mind and thoughts. The Apostle would have the Christians of Philippi set their heart and mind and will, in holy concentration of attention, upon the 'one thing', the glory of their God and Saviour. He longed to see 'the mind of Christ' fully reproduced in them. If their 'mind', in this sense, were right, their life would be found to be right also. While others, therefore, 'mind earthly things' (iii. 19), let every faithful Christian, with all the energy which the Spirit Himself inspires, set heart and mind and will on Christ and on His holiness.

(4) *It is an Epistle full of fellowship.* We are almost startled, at first sight, to notice how thickly it is studded with picture-words compounded from the preposition *σύν* (with), denoting the closest fellowship and most intimate association. The very reading of these compound words were enough to



kill the spirit of rivalry and faction. We feel, as we study them, how close and real are the bonds which bind together all who 'love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.' The words in question are as follows:—

- (a) Fellow-partakers (*συγκοινωνός*), sharing the grace of Christ together; sharing the afflictions of Christ together. (i. 7; iv. 14).
- (b) Fellow-athletes (*συναθλέω*), wrestling for Christ together. (i. 27; iv. 3).
- (c) Fellow-spirits (*σύμψυχος*), united in Christ together—in mind and soul. (ii. 2).
- (d) Fellow-rejoicers (*συγχαίρω*), rejoicing in Christ together. (ii. 17, 18).
- (e) Fellow-workers (*συνεργός*), working the work of Christ together. (ii. 25; iv. 3).
- (f) Fellow-soldiers (*συστρατιώτης*), waging the wars of Christ together. (ii. 25).
- (g) Fellow-helpers (*συνλαμβάνω*), holding the burdens of Christ together. (iv. 3).
- (h) Fellow-yokebearers (*σύζυγος*), bearing the yoke of Christ together. (iv. 3).

Thus every chapter is illuminated with the bright doctrine of 'the communion of saints', and compounds expressive of that doctrine are heaped together with rare profusion. Happy is the Church which, while it holds fast the trust of the Gospel, is characterized by this grand feature of Christian unity.

The following is suggested as an easy, useful analysis of the Epistle:—

#### I. PRAYER, AND PERSONAL

Introductory salutation. i. 1, 2.

Thanksgiving and Prayer. i. 3-11.

Personal. St. Paul's bonds, work, rivals, dilemma, convictions. i. 12-26.

## II. HORTATIVE, AND PERSONAL

Exhortation to consistency and courage. i. 27-30.

Exhortation to unselfishness and unity. ii. 1-4.

Example of Christ's humility. ii. 5-11.

Exhortation to obedience and holiness. ii. 12-16.

Personal. Explanation of plans. Missions of Timothy and Epaphroditus. ii. 17-30.

## III. ADMONITORY

Warning against Judaism. iii. 1-14.

Warning against Antinomianism. iii. 15-21.

## IV. HORTATIVE, AND PERSONAL

Exhortations to unity, joy, forbearance, prayer, etc. iv. 1-9.

Personal. His thankfulness for their gifts; his contentment under all circumstances. iv. 10-20.

Closing salutation. iv. 21-23.

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VII. LESSONS OF THE EPISTLE FOR THE  
INDIAN CHURCH

The circumstances of the Philippian converts present numerous parallels with those of Indian Christians in our day. They had been gathered out from among the heathen, to be the people of the living God. They were surrounded on every side by those who did not own allegiance to the Heavenly Master, but still walked on in Pagan darkness. The religious cults of the Greeks and Romans were venerable from their antiquity, presenting many points of contact, and even identity, with those prevalent in India to-day. Their philosophies were deep and subtle; their classical literature rich and extensive. The educated classes, again, were beginning to be ashamed of vain

ceremonies and idol-worship. It was, everywhere, a period of change and transition. The application of these facts to modern India will be obvious to all. We might expect, therefore, *primâ facie*, that the teaching of an Epistle to an infant Church so situated would be particularly suited to the needs of Indian Christians; and, as we examine it with this thought before us, we shall not be disappointed. What, then, are the chief lessons which we may learn for ourselves from this earnest Pastoral addressed to a community whose condition and surroundings were so analogous to our own?

1. **A lesson of missionary zeal.**—The Epistle to Philippi is marked by a strong, keen missionary spirit. Evangelistic zeal is writ large on every page of it. The hand which penned it was the hand of one who had consecrated his whole life, with all its powers, to the work of promoting the salvation of the heathen and whose earnest motto stands out, in large, bold type, in the very centre of his letter—‘ONE THING I DO.’ Even in prison, he prosecuted his missionary work, preaching the Gospel to the soldier-warders who were bound to him with chains, insomuch that the sweet savour of the knowledge of Christ permeated the whole camp of the Praetorian Guards (i. 12, 13). Here was a Missionary who never rested on his oars, a soldier of the Cross who never failed to show his colours. His enthusiasm proved contagious. Fired by his example, the Roman Christians took courage and witnessed boldly for their Lord (i. 14). And the result was,—what it will ever be when God’s people are filled with missionary zeal and are roused to earnest evangelistic work—‘the progress of the Gospel’ (i. 12). But the Apostle was not satisfied with encouragement in Rome; he longed to see advance all along the line. He loved the Philippian converts far too much to see them settle down at ease, in the enjoyment of spiritual privilege, careless about the souls around them. From the very first he had sought to instil into their hearts a warm, evangelistic spirit. Nor had his teaching and example been in vain.

They had helped him, from the beginning, in his missionary work. They had reinforced him, in his campaign in Thessalonica and other cities, by their gifts and prayers (iv. 16), and this repeatedly. Still more recently, they had sent Epaphroditus as their 'Missionary substitute' (see ii. 30) to carry further gifts and to render personal co-operation (ii. 25-30; iv. 10, 18). Nay, more, it was their glory and their joy to have assisted actively in the propagation of the Gospel by sympathy, by prayer, by contributions, and (shall we doubt it?) by actual evangelistic labours, 'from the first day until now' (i. 5). They had caught, by happy contagion, something of their great founder's missionary spirit. The flame was burning, but it needed fanning still. The metal was warm, but the Apostle longed to see it heated quite red-hot. He therefore turns upon it, in this inspired Epistle, the furnace blast of his own glowing enthusiasm, in the power of the Holy Ghost. He urges them to a bolder conflict and to a bolder testimony. They are citizens of Rome, and, as such, responsible for upholding the honour of the State among aliens and barbarians; let them remember that they are also citizens of heaven, bound to fight mightily for the Commonwealth of Christ, 'with one soul striving for the faith of the Gospel, in nothing affrighted by the adversaries' (i. 27, 28). He would stimulate them to a life of evangelistic effort, enforced and illustrated by true consistency of conduct (ii. 15, 16). Let them shine as God's light-bearers in the world, offering for the acceptance of all with whom they come in contact the word of eternal life. Let them emulate the example of their own Epaphroditus who 'for the work of Christ' had been nigh unto death, 'gambling with his life,' in the desperate earnestness of holy zeal, for the glory of his Lord and the salvation of his fellow-men (ii. 30). Thus we see that the whole Epistle burns and glows with an ardent missionary spirit. It presents a grand array, too, of what we may call,

## MISSIONARY MOTTOES.

In furtherance of the Gospel. i. 5.

The defence and confirmation of the Gospel. i. 7, 16.

Unto the progress of the Gospel. i. 12.

Striving together for the faith of the Gospel. i. 27.

As lights in the world. ii. 15.

Holding forth the word of life. ii. 16.

For the work of Christ. ii. 30.

But one thing I do. iii. 13.

Fellow-Christians of India, let us catch the fire of this holy zeal. We, too, are citizens of heaven. We, too, are called to be soldiers of the Cross. Let the Church of India be a missionary Church. Be this its one great object, 'the progress of the Gospel.' Be this its grand ambition, to hold forth to men of alien faiths the word of God's eternal life; to strive with an untiring energy 'for the faith of the Gospel.' Never let it be forgotten that a non-missionary Church is a stagnant, doomed, and dying Church.

**2. A lesson of humility.**—The Epistle teaches us the dangers which arise from human pride and self-assertiveness, and points us to the one true antidote, the putting on, by faith, of 'the mind which was in Christ Jesus.' The Apostle is himself the exemplar of his teaching. From the Jewish standpoint, he held, by birth and education, a position of influence and social superiority. He could claim a noble ancestry, an orthodox upbringing, a status in every way beyond reproach (iii. 4-8). But all these advantages of race, and class, which men count 'gains', he had counted 'loss' for Christ. The caste spirit, for him at least, was of the earth, earthy; it was, as he now beheld it, carnal and anti-Christian. It had been expelled from his heart, once and for all, when he yielded himself to Christ and became the 'bondslave' of his Lord. Now he worshipped by the spirit of God, and gloried in Christ Jesus, and had no confidence in the

flesh (iii. 3). The old pride of birth and pedigree (and who so boastful of them as a patriotic Jew?), the once strong zeal for caste and creed, that vaunted orthodoxy and punctilious observance of every minute detail of national and religious customs which characterized the Hebrew Pharisee, all these were cast away for ever, as refuse thrown to dogs (*σκύβαλα*). A nobler birthright, a grander status, were his in Christ. Why cling to earthly dust when a crown of glory was within his reach? Why claim a place of trifling social precedence among the sons of Adam, when he had now become, by grace, a child of God? His choice, then, was made, and made for ever. He counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord. And who will venture to question the wisdom or the rightness of that choice?

Having thus turned his back on the empty glories of race and caste, he could invite others, with a good conscience, to follow in his steps. He bids them, therefore, each to 'esteem other better than themselves' (ii. 3-8). The Spirit of Christ and the spirit of the world are mutually and eternally antagonistic to each other. If the Philippians would do the will of God, they must abjure that party-spirit and class-pride which have no place in the Gospel of our Lord. A nobler example than that of Paul is theirs. Let them remember and contemplate, till their souls are aglow with the power of it, the supreme unselfishness of Jesus, the Son of God. Had He not denied Himself, forbearing to hold fast, as some peerless prize, the prerogatives of Deity? Had He not further 'emptied Himself', divesting Himself of heavenly glory and Divine majesty, for the sake of fallen man? And had He not, stooping lower still, 'humbled Himself' to take the form of a bonds slave and become obedient, aye, even to the death of the Cross? In the light of that sublime Self-sacrifice, what room is left for the mean pride of earthly greatness? Surely the teaching of

the Epistle is clear and decisive on this point, and presses home on us the strong *conviction that every form of caste-spirit is under the ban for ever*. Is there no need of this lesson in the Indian Church to-day? Racial distinctions and caste-prejudices are the cause of much weakness, and the fruitful source of many evils. It were a fatal policy to attempt to justify the toleration of what, beyond all doubt, is 'not of the Father, but of the world.' We need to realize our spiritual birth-right, to take our place as citizens of heaven, to view things in the light of the Sacrifice of Calvary. 'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.' In that 'mind', human pride and caste distinctions have not, nor can they ever have, a place. Let us cease to follow earthly standards and to cling to carnal customs. A Church is strong and vigorous in proportion to its faithfulness to Scripture and its depth of spirituality. It is weak and carnal when it conforms to the spirit of the world.

3. **A lesson of liberality.**—The Philippian Christians afford a conspicuous example of generosity in giving. In common with the other Macedonian Churches, they gave to the cause of God 'according to their power, yea, and beyond their power' (2 Cor. viii. 1-4). They had given proof after proof to their beloved Apostle of their willingness to deny themselves for the furtherance of the Gospel (iv. 15, 16). How gladly they seized the new opportunity now presented to them for sending contributions to help the cause at Rome! (i. 5; iv. 10). Out of their poverty they gave, and gladly gave, for Christ's sake and the Gospel's. Here is no Infant Church subsidized from foreign sources. Rather we see a strong and active congregation, with an organized staff of superintending bishops and of assistant deacons, self-supporting and independent, subscribing funds, again and again, for the propagation of the Gospel in other lands.

Who will deny that, here in India, we fall far short of so inspiring an example? While we can thank God for progress made and for a growing realization of the duties of self-support and independence, truth requires us to confess that a spirit of reliance on the arm of flesh and a readiness to receive financial help from others are still sadly rife among us. We have not yet learned to give 'according to our power, yea, and beyond our power.' Surely the time has come for unlearning, and, with God's help, for undoing, some of the mistakes of the past. We have been children long enough. Now let us quit ourselves like men. Indian fellow-Christians! out of our poverty, if need be, like the Philippians of old, let us give with a liberal hand for the support of our congregations and for the spread of the Gospel. Never let it be said that, while new churches stepped out into independence in Uganda and elsewhere, the Indian Church remained content to live a sort of parasite existence. Let us trust God and go forward. May we give *until we feel the cost of giving*. So shall we prove the truth of the promise made to the liberal Christians of Philippi—'My God shall fulfil every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus' (iv. 19).

**4. A lesson of spirituality.**—One of the difficulties which confronted the Apostle Paul was the constant danger, in the newly-planted churches, arising from a tendency to substitute a system of externalism for that which is the distinctive feature of true Christianity, the worship of the Father 'in spirit and in truth.' We have only to read carefully the Epistles to the Galatians and Colossians to realize the existence, and constant recrudescence, of this deadly evil. The Apostle, with a true instinct, saw that the growth of such an error would be fatal to the very life of Christianity, and so set himself, in down-right earnest, to arrest its progress and to extirpate it altogether. Although we have no reason for supposing that the Philippian Church was in any special peril of this kind,



yet the note of warning rings out in the Epistle with no uncertain sound. St. Paul says in effect (ch. iii. 2, 3), 'Be on your guard. Watch carefully all teachers who emphasize carnal ordinances and lay stress upon ceremonial observances. We Christians serve God in the Spirit, not with the ordinances and traditions of men.' It is our glory that we are Christ's and Christ is our's. We place no confidence in the flesh, or in those outward forms which pass with some for true religion.' His own experience had taught him the tremendous gulf which lies between a system of externalism, however grand and venerable, and a living contact and communion with the Saviour in the power of the Holy Ghost. To turn back from this religion of the Spirit to the bondage of carnal ordinances was nothing less, in his estimation, than a fatal lapse from grace (Gal. v. 4). He was bound, therefore, in very faithfulness, to warn his converts against a danger as insidious as it was deadly. To know Christ, in the full sense of the words, and the power of His Resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, *this* is true religion. All else is naught. And India needs the warning as truly as did Galatia, Philippi, or Colossæ. The atmosphere around us, alike in Hinduism and Muhammadanism, is that of a system of external ceremonial. With the follower of Islâm, an outward routine of prayers and fasts and prescribed duties usurps the place of fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. While, with the Hindu, an elaborate ritual, with all the paraphernalia of idolatry, appeals to the senses of the people. We dare not ignore the danger which this involves to Indian Christianity. We, too, need to be on our guard lest symbolism and externalism are allowed to make dim our faith and hide from us the Face of God. Our truest wisdom lies in drawing a sharp line of demarcation between the external systems of the non-Christian religions of the country and the essentially spiritual character of the Gospel. Let us raise,

as a Church, the banner of spiritual religion. Avoiding an external symbolism which appeals merely to the æsthetic senses, and which approximates, in non-Christian eyes at least, to the ritual ceremonial of the heathen world around us, let us accept the watchword of St. Paul, and act upon it, 'we worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.'

**5. A lesson of consistency.**—There will always be a disposition on the part of human nature to divorce faith from practice. In no country is this more discernible than in India. Here, for generations, the Hindus have been accustomed to profess doctrines with which their lives are often at variance. To quote, with apparent sincerity, stanzas from moral poets strongly denunciatory of idolatry, and, an hour afterwards, to go and do puja in an idol-temple, is a mode of procedure which presents a strange spectacle of human inconsistency and argues ill for the reality of men's convictions.

Now, our Epistle, recognizing the existence of an analogous danger in the Christian Church, sounds a loud, clear note of warning on the subject. In the Apostle's days, whether in Philippi or elsewhere, there were those, and their number was by no means inconsiderable, who, while professing faith in Christ, by their lives denied Him (ch. iii. 17-19). St. Paul weeps as he writes of them. They do more harm to the Gospel cause than hosts of acknowledged unbelievers. They are, *par excellence*, beyond all doubt, 'the enemies of the Cross of Christ.' A terrible fate awaits all such unholy Christians. Their 'end is destruction.' Good had it been for these antinomian impostors if they had not been born.

Indian Christian brethren, we have been 'called unto holiness.' Let us beware of severing faith and practice. Nothing is more un-Christian, in reality, than to profess the *faith* of Christ while we are aliens to the *life* of Christ. In this land, where creed and practice are so widely and disastrously dissociated from each other, let the Christian Church stand

forth to view as God's witness to the reality of true religion. Let our light shine before men. Let them see that we are what we profess to be, and that we *practice* what we believe. Let it be seen that new power is our's, the power of God to sanctify our lives, as well as new ideals. So shall our Lord be glorified. So shall we be 'a praise' in the earth.

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## VIII. OUTLINE TOPICAL STUDIES OF THE EPISTLE

The reader is recommended to study the Epistle from various points of view, in order to appreciate the fulness of its teaching. By way of suggestion, some topical outlines are appended, and these may be multiplied by the careful student. The first of these outlines is written at some length, as a useful sample. The remainder are presented only in brief, but may be similarly expanded.

### A. The Epistle of Christian Joy.

Chapter 1.—SERVICE JOY. THE JOY OF GOD'S SERVICE.

- (1) *Joyful in Prayer*.—vv. 1-11. N.B.—Prayer comes first in service.
  - (a) Salutation.—vv. 1-2.
  - (b) Supplication.—vv. 3-11.
- (2) *Joyful in Prison*.—vv. 12-20.
  - (a) In spite of bonds.—vv. 12-14.
  - (b) In spite of rivals.—vv. 15-18.
  - (c) In spite of suspense.—vv. 19-20.
- (3) *Joyful in Purpose*.—vv. 21-30.
  - (a) A deliberate choice.—vv. 21-4.
  - (b) A happy confidence.—vv. 25-6.
  - (c) A heavenly citizenship.—vv. 27-30.

*Citizen conduct, co-operation*,—v. 27, and *conflict*.—vv. 28-30.

## Chapter 2.—SACRIFICE JOY. THE JOY OF GOD'S ALTAR.

The highest joy comes from deep abasement.

(1) *Joyful in Self-denial.*—vv. 1-11.

The right attitude for blessing is to be

(a) Loving and of one accord.—vv. 1-2.

(b) Lowly and of humble spirit.—v. 3.

(c) Looking on the things of others.—v. 4.

(d) Like-minded with Christ.—vv. 5-11.

His humiliation.—vv. 6-8. Steps down.

He denied Himself.—v. 6.

He emptied Himself.—v. 7.

He humbled Himself.—v. 8.

His exaltation.—vv. 9-11. Steps up.

High exaltation.—v. 9.

Supreme honour.—v. 9.

Universal homage.—vv. 10-11.

(2) *Joyful in Sacrifice.*—vv. 12-18.

(a) Solicitude concerning the converts. vv. 12-14.

(b) Satisfaction over the converts.—vv. 15-16.

(c) Self-sacrifice for the converts.—vv. 17-18.

(3) *Joyful in Sympathy.*—vv. 19-30.

A tender mosaic of St. Paul's care for the converts, his love for his friends, and their affection for each other.

*Two special Missioners.*

(a) Timothy, the keen Missionary.—vv. 19-24.

His proposed Mission.—v. 19.

His practical sympathy.—vv. 20-21.

His proved Missionary zeal.—vv. 22-24.

(b) Epaphroditus, the loving Minister.—vv. 25-30.

His sterlingness.—v. 25.

His tenderness.—vv. 26-27.

His worthiness.—vv. 28-29.

His faithfulness.—v. 30.

## Chapter 3.—SPIRITUAL JOY. THE JOY OF GOD'S SPIRIT.

(1) *Counting all loss for Christ.*—vv. 1-11.

(a) Spiritual joy.—v. 1.

(b) Spiritual religion.—vv. 2-4.

(c) Spiritual gain.—vv. 5-9.

(d) Spiritual ambition.—vv. 10-11.

(2) *Pressing on to the Prize.*—vv. 12-16.

(a) Present attainments.—v. 12.

(b) Persistent advance.—vv. 13-14.

‘Forgetting’, ‘Stretching forward’, ‘Pressing’  
on.’

(c) Practical advice.—vv. 15-16.

(3) *Looking ever for the Lord.*—vv. 17-21.

(a) Walk holily.—vv. 17-19.

The Christian walk.—v. 17.

The un-Christian walk.—vv. 18-19.

(b) Wait eagerly.—vv. 20-21.

The citizenship.—v. 20.

The Coming.—v. 20.

The change.—v. 21.

## Chapter 4.—SATISFYING JOY. THE JOY OF GOD'S FULNESS.

The three marks of this chapter are:—

Peace.—vv. 6, 7, 9.

Power.—v. 13.

Plenty.—vv. 18-19.

(1) *Joyful in Obedience.*—vv. 1-9.Notice seven golden precepts environing true Christian  
joy.

(a) Stand fast in the Lord.—v. 1.

(b) Be of the same mind in the Lord.—v. 2.

(c) Help them who laboured in the Gospel.—v. 3.

(Then comes the exhortation to ‘REJOICE’  
in the centre.)

(d) Let your forbearance be known.—v. 5.

(e) In nothing be anxious.—vv. 6-7.

(f) Think on these things.—v. 8.

(g) The things which ye learned, do.—v. 9

(2) *Joyful in Abundance*.—vv. 10-23.

(a) The secret.—vv. 10-13.

(b) The sweet savour.—vv. 14-18.

Fellowship (14-16); Fruit (17); Fulness (18).

(c) The supply.—vv. 19-20.

The salutation.—vv. 21-3.

## B. The Epistle of Christian Citizenship.

Chapter 1.—THE CITIZENS AND THEIR MILITARY SERVICE  
(See vv. 5, 7, 12, 17, 27).

Remember that Roman citizens were liable for service in time of war, and must help to defend the Empire.

Chapter 2.—THE CITIZENS AND THEIR CIVIC CONDUCT.

e.g.—Unity—v. 2; humility—v. 3; unselfishness—vv. 4, etc.; contentedness—v. 14; innocency—v. 15; consistency—v. 15; testimony—vv. 15, 16; joyfulness—vv. 18, 28, 29.

Chapter 3.—THE CITIZENS AND THEIR SPECIAL PRIVILEGES.

Remember the three ways of obtaining Roman citizenship:

(1) By birth, e.g., St. Paul. Acts xxii. 28.

(2) By purchase, e.g., Claudius Lysias. Acts xxii. 28.

(3) By favour, e.g., Philippians. (Apply to our adoption as God's children).

Remember, also, the three great privileges of citizenship:

(1) Immunity from punishment.—Acts xxii. 25; Rom. viii. 1.

(2) Appeal to Emperor.—Acts xxv. 11; 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

(3) Share in glory of Caesar's triumph.—Col. iii. 4.

Notice, in this chapter :

- (a) The toga.....Christ's righteousness.—vv.3, 9.
- (b) The triumph...the Resurrection.—vv. 10, 11, 21.
- (c) The largesse...the prize.—vv. 12-14.

**Chapter 4.—THE CITIZENS AND THEIR SPECIAL DUTIES.**

Remember that Roman citizens had certain taxes to pay, and were responsible for supplying contributions and service for the Imperial wars; also that they had the power of the Emperor and the resources of the State to cheer and sustain them.

**C. The Epistle of Christian Character.**

Chapter 1.—THE MIND OF UNITY.

Chapter 2.—THE MIND OF HUMILITY.

Chapter 3.—THE MIND OF HOLINESS.

Chapter 4.—THE MIND OF LIBERALITY.

*Otherwise*

1. The mind of confident assurance; trusting God to finish His work. i. 6, 7.
  2. The mind of corporate unity; combining together for God's service. ii. 2; iii. 16; iv. 2.
  3. The mind of Christ's humility; humbling ourselves for God's glory. ii. 5.
  4. The mind of constant progress; reaching forth to God's prize. iii. 13-15.
  5. The mind of careful benevolence; assisting in the advancement of God's cause. iv. 10, etc.
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# THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

## PHILIPPIANS

**P**AUL and Timothy, <sup>1</sup> servants of Christ Jesus, <sup>1</sup> Gr. *bond-ser.* **1**  
to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are *vants.*

### TITLE

The oldest form of title is simply 'To the Philippians', or rather 'To the Philippians', the word 'Philippian' being an adjective which is found in ch. iv. 15, and also occurs in the heading of Polycarp's famous letter to this Church (Intro. II).

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### CHAPTER I

#### 1—2. INTRODUCTORY SALUTATION

**1. Paul]** As in 1 Thes., 2 Thes., and in Philemon, the Apostle's official designation is omitted here, because his authority was not called in question at Philippi. There was no need for him to write *ex cathedra* to such loyal, loving friends. From Acts xiii. 9, and onwards, he is invariably called 'Paul', whether because the name was then given him for the first time; or because he chose it, as St. Augustine thought, from humility, to express his own sense of unworthiness (*paulus*=little); or because he took it, as Jerome would believe, to commemorate the conversion of Sergius Paulus; or because, as is very probable, he had borne from infancy the Gentile name Paul together with the Hebrew name Saul, according to a custom common in those days among the Jews, and used it in preference from the time when he came prominently forward as the Apostle of the Gentiles.

2 <sup>2</sup> Or, *Overseers*. at Philippi, with the <sup>2</sup>bishops and deacons : Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the

**Timothy]** Converted, most probably, during St. Paul's first visit to Lystra (cf. 2 Tim. iii. 10, 11 and 1 Tim. i. 2 with Acts xiv. 19, 20 ; xvi. 1-2) ; and chosen as a companion by the Apostle in place of either Barnabas or John Mark (Acts xv. 39-41 ; xvi. 1-3). He had been intimately associated from the first with Philippi. He accompanied the Apostle there on his first visit (Acts xvi. 3-4, 10-12). Twice, at least, in after days, he seems to have been there again (Acts xix. 22 ; xx. 3-4, 6). Possibly still other visits were paid. He is seen in this Epistle (ii. 19-22) to be on the eve of yet another mission to that town.

But for this association in the salutation, Timotheus plays no further part in the message of the Epistle, the rest of which is written by St. Paul in the singular number.

**Servants]** that is, 'bond-servants, slaves'. This is a favourite word of the Apostle's in speaking of himself (Rom. i. 1 ; 2 Cor. iv. 5 ; Gal. i. 10 ; Tit. i. 1). It implies the complete surrender of the man into the absolute possession of the divine Lord, and also the right of Christ to that absolute service which only God can claim.<sup>1</sup> Among the Romans, the slave was regarded as the property of his master, in the same sense and degree as that master's goods and chattels, to be used by him at will. Every Christian is regarded in the New Testament as accepting this attitude of entire submission to the will of Christ (Rom. vi. 16-22 ; xii. 1 ; 1 Cor. vi. 19-20).

**Christ Jesus]** So the order of the words according to the oldest MSS. It is St. Paul's more usual collocation of the words. The emphasis thus laid on the word *Christ*, the King Messiah, calls attention to His authority and is appropriate to the thought of the context—His claim to command His bondslaves.

**The Saints]** The root idea of this word is 'consecration, or separation from sin to God'. All Christians are called to be 'holy ones', and the New Testament assumes this as an axiom and addresses them on the hypothesis that they are what they profess to be. An unholy Christian ought to be an impossibility, when we view the matter in the light of God's purpose and provision. The word thus denotes all those who have entered into covenant relationship with God, regarded as being genuine in their profession. It is, in itself, a protest against all attempts to divorce faith from practice, and needs to be strongly

<sup>1</sup> Compare the prefix 'Abd or Ghulām in Muslim names, such as 'Abdu'l-Khālīq. Though sometimes prefixed to human names ('Abdu'l-'Alī, Ghulam Muhammad), this is regarded by orthodox Muslims as shirk (creature worship), and rightly.

## Lord Jesus Christ.

emphasized in countries like India where the prevailing tendency has been to exalt the philosophical aspects of religion and to neglect the moral and the practical.

**In Christ Jesus]** He is alike the *source* and the *sphere*<sup>1</sup> of our holiness. It is only as *being* in him, the Holy One, and *abiding* in Him, by faith, through grace, that we are, or can be, 'saints'. It is one thing to be 'in Christianity', and another thing to be 'in Christ Jesus'.

**With the bishops and deacons]** The laity here take precedence of the clergy. The latter are added separately because, though included in the term 'saints', they are differentiated by their office, being men chosen out of the congregation to fulfil the ministerial functions of the congregation. Some have thought that the separate mention may be due to the fact that the contributions to St. Paul by Epaphroditus may have been collected and forwarded by them, as the officers of the Church. But this is more than questionable. The term 'bishop' or 'overseer' (ἐπίσκοπος) was at that early period probably applied to all presbyters (see, e.g., Acts xx. 17, 28). The word 'deacon' is used in this verse for the first time in a technical sense. Occurring, as the term (διάκονος) does, thirty times in the New Testament, it is only used three or four times as an official title, its ordinary meaning being merely 'a ministering servant'.

We have thus, in this verse, a passing view of the gradual growth of Church organization, and a very early testimony to the fact that definite orders of the ministry already existed, to be further shaped and developed as time went on.

**2. Grace to you and peace, etc.]** The salutations of the West and East are for ever united in this Christian greeting. All that the Greek meant by his ordinary greeting 'grace', and all that the Asiatic means by 'peace' (Arabic 'salām', Hebrew 'shalom'), are eternally blended and fulfilled in Christ. Thus the New Testament salutation is a pledge of the union of the East and West in our common Saviour, and a sign that the highest ideals of both find their consummation and fullest expression in Him. It is also a challenge to us to sink all racial feeling and national prejudices, since we all meet and are fused together in Christ. Besides this aspect of customary greeting, the words, as here used, emphatically convey their primary meaning.

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<sup>1</sup> By 'sphere' in this sense we mean the region or surroundings in which a person lives. 'The Lord (i.e., Christ) is the Spirit' (2 Cor. iii. 17); the life we have, through union with Him, is an infinite one, yet centred in a Person; in Him we live as in a new spiritual atmosphere.

3 I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you, always in  
4 every supplication of mine on behalf of you all making my

**Grace]** Denotes God's unmerited kindness, in all His dealings with unworthy men.

**Peace]** Includes that 'peace with God' which is the result of reconciliation through Christ (2 Cor. v. 18-21; Rom. v. 1), and also that 'peace of God' which is continually imparted to those who live the life of faith in Him (ch. iv. 6, 7). It may be noted that since, in this Epistle, 'grace' is used in connexion with evangelistic work (i. 7), while 'peace' occurs in reference to rest of soul amidst the trials of Christian life and labours (iv. 6, 7), we have here a special message to Christian workers, *grace for service*, and *peace in service*, be unto you.

#### NOTICE IN THIS SECTION

- (a) *The right view of ministers and workers.*—The 'bond-slaves of Christ Jesus', called to serve, not to be 'lords over God's heritage'.
- (b) *The right view of all true Christians.*—The 'saints in Christ Jesus', called to genuine holiness of life and character.
- (c) *The right view of the Christian laity.*—A holy priesthood, with the bishops and deacons added as necessary officials, taken out of the laity to do the ecclesiastical work of the laity. From the New Testament standpoint, it is absolutely wrong to speak of the body of clergy as constituting 'the Church'. Every Christian layman must take his place as a witness, an intercessor, a worker for God, in India (cf. 1 Pet. ii. 9).

#### 3-11. THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER

These verses include *thankful remembrance* (v. 3); *joyful supplication* (vv. 4, 5); *happy confidence* (v. 6); *fervent desire* (vv. 7-8); and *earnest prayer* (vv. 9-11).

**3. I thank]** The Apostle, in writing to the Churches, was able to thank God for all of them, except the Galatians, among whom serious apostasy was rife (see Rom. i. 8; 1 Cor. i. 4; Eph. i. 16; Col. i. 3; 1 Thes. i. 2; ii. 13; 2 Thes. i. 3; ii. 13; Philem. 4). But his warmest thanksgivings are excited by the Macedonian Churches, Philippi and Thessalonica. Here, so great is his love and gratitude, 'he repeats words and accumulates clauses in the intensity of his feeling'.—Bishop Lightfoot.

**My God]** A phrase of frequent occurrence in the devotional portions of the book of Psalms (e.g., Ps. lxxiii. 1; lxxxvi. 2.) It expresses strongly both *personal relationship* and *habitual fellowship*. St. Paul

supplication with joy, for your fellowship in furtherance of the 5

uses it again in Rom. i. 8; 1 Cor. i. 4; 2 Cor. xii. 21; Philem. 4. It occurs also in ch. iv. 19, so that this Epistle both begins and ends with it.

**Upon all my remembrance of you]** The phrase denotes not an occasional recollection of them in a series of isolated acts, but rather a habitual remembrance. He could dwell thankfully in thought, too, on *the whole range* of his memory of them; his entire recollection of them was green and refreshing. His gratitude was stirred as he thought of souls saved from sin and Satan, lives uplifted and sanctified, obedience and service rendered to his Lord. *Thanksgiving* and *recollection* occur together also in Rom. i. 8, 9; Eph. i. 16; 1 Thes. i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 3; Philem. 4; though the thought in those passages is slightly different.

**4. Always]** The word occurs about twenty-seven times in St. Paul's writings, and the passages will well repay study. In this Epistle we meet with it four times, namely:

- (a) Always praying. i. 4.
- (b) Always magnifying Christ. i. 20.
- (c) Always obeying. ii. 12.
- (d) Always rejoicing. iv. 4.

**Every supplication]** The Greek word denotes 'a definite request, arising from a real sense of need'. It is found again in this Epistle in i. 19; iv. 6. In praying for the converts, the Apostle was no wild beater of the air. He realized exactly what they needed, and sought earnestly from God a specific supply of those defined needs.

**On behalf of you all]** The studied repetition of the phrase 'you all' is remarkable (i. 4; i. 7, twice; i. 8, 25; ii. 17, 26). It probably suggests a gentle rebuke of the party-spirit at Philippi. The Apostle, at least, loves and prays *for all*, without distinction. May we not learn from this that the loving prayer of Christian men for all their fellow-Christians, of whatever extraction, will prove one of the best antidotes to anything like caste-spirit and will go far to rebuke and banish it?

Lightfoot would connect the words with 'I thank God' rather than with 'every prayer of mine'. The grammar allows either connexion, and both are suggestive.

**Making my supplication]** Literally, 'making the supplication', i.e., the supplication referred to in the former part of this verse.

**With joy]** These words, in the original, are emphatic from their position, '*with joy* making my supplication'. All his prayers for them were radiant with joy. This is the first occurrence of one of the keywords of the Epistle (Introd. VI).

**6 gospel from the first day until now ;** being confident of this very thing, that he which began a good work in you will

**5. For your fellowship, etc.]** Conybeare and Howson translate 'For your fellowship in forwarding the glad-tidings'. The word 'fellowship' is restricted in some passages (e.g., Rom. xv. 26 ; 2 Cor. ix. 13) to the sense of 'pecuniary contributions', and we know that the Philippians had materially assisted St. Paul in this manner (ch. iv. 14-17). But their 'fellowship' cannot be limited to that alone ; it took the wider form of co-operation in work, and included sympathy, suffering, and service. These early Christians were real helpers in the holy war. The phrase 'in furtherance of the Gospel' (*εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον*) occurs again in 2 Cor. ii. 12 ; ix. 13 ; Phil. ii. 22 ; and forms a grand motto for evangelistic work.

(a) Journeying in furtherance of the Gospel. 2 Cor. ii. 12.

(b) Obeying God                   "           "           "           2 Cor. ix. 13.

(c) Co-operating                   "           "           "           Phil. i. 5.

(d) Serving (as a bondman)       "           "           "           Phil. ii. 22.

The word 'Gospel' is found nine times in this Epistle (i. 5, 7, 12, 16, 27, twice ; ii. 22 ; iv. 3, 15). Its reiteration in this chapter is remarkable, and the collation of the phrases in which it occurs will repay study. The present condition of India is a loud call to Indian Christians to co-operate 'for the furtherance of the Gospel'.

The whole clause is to be connected directly with 'I thank my God'. Their practical fellowship was the special ground of the thanksgiving.

**From the first day until now]** See ch. iv. 10-19. The 'first day' reaches back at least to his first departure from Philippi and to the substantial aid which they had then sent after him. 'Now' refers to their special contributions just received at Rome (ii. 25). In their constant liberality and missionary zeal, the Philippians are an object lesson to us in India.

**6. Being confident]** The word denotes 'personal certainty'. It was an assurance founded on past experience. Christian workers need to be confident in

(a) God's perfect and complete working. Phil. i. 6.

(b) The reality and integrity of converts. 2 Cor. ii. 3 ; 2 Thes. iii. 4.

(c) The sincerity of their own conscience. Heb. xiii. 18.

(d) Divine guidance in their work. Phil. i. 25.

**Of this very thing]** Some would translate 'on this very account', 'according'. But the phrase seems to indicate the substance of his confidence rather than the ground for it.

**He which began]** That is, at the time of their conversion. This particular verb occurs again only in Gal. iii. 3. It is used, sometimes, by

<sup>3</sup> Or, *ye have me in your heart.*

perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ; even as it is right for me to be thus minded on behalf of you <sup>7</sup> all, because <sup>3</sup>I have you in my heart, inasmuch

the Greeks, in a sacrificial sense, and denotes the action of beginning an offering.

**A good work]** The 'good work' of salvation and sanctification, which commenced with their conversion. This would involve all other 'good works', such as their co-operation in the spread of the Gospel.

**Will perfect]** The word means 'to bring to perfection' (cf. Ps. cxxxviii. 8). It is noteworthy that this word also is used at times in a sacrificial sense, and so would complete the metaphor suggested by the word 'began'.

**Until the day of Jesus Christ]** The sanctifying work goes on 'right up to' the glorious time referred to in ch. iii. 20, 21, when it will be consummated. He does not say 'until the day of your death', for the Coming, not death, is the goal of the Christian Church. The verse glows with anticipation of the near approach of the Advent.

The exact expression 'the day of Jesus Christ' seems to be peculiar to this one passage. In 1 Cor. i. 8, it is 'the day of our Lord Jesus Christ'; and in 1 Cor. v. 5; 2 Cor. i. 14, 'the day of the Lord Jesus'; while in Phil. i. 10; ii. 16, we have 'the day of Christ'. For 'the day of the Lord', see 1 Thes. v. 2; 2 Thes. ii. 2; 2 Pet. iii. 10 (cf. 'the day of Jehovah' frequently spoken of by the Old Testament prophets).

**7. To be thus minded]** Or, 'to be of this mind, to feel thus', i.e., to realize the thankfulness spoken of above. Here appears for the first time another of the keywords of the Epistle (*φρονεῖν*) (Introd. VI).

**On behalf of you all]** Or, perhaps, 'Over you all, or about you all', regarding them as the ground of his thankfulness of mind. Both renderings are permissible, and both ideas fit the context. But the rendering in the text gives an excellent meaning, suggesting his joyful intercession for them.

**Because I have you in my heart]** This may also be translated 'because you have me in your heart', but the context seems decisive in favour of the rendering in the text. Cf. 2 Cor. iii. 2. It is not hard to love people when we have them in our hearts! So also, to love God's ways and word and law, we are to have them in our heart (Ps. lxxxiv. 5; Rom. x. 8; Heb. viii. 10).

The strong affection which should bind minister and people together is indicated here, and the words contain a lesson alike for foreign missionaries, Indian pastors, and the Christian laity. Let love prevail.

as, both in my bonds and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers with me of grace. For God is my

**In my bonds]** We see by vv. 29, 30 that the Philippians knew what it was to suffer for Christ, and that their conflict resembled that of the Apostle. Some of them may even have been imprisoned for their faith. At least, they were sharers of his bonds in the sense of sympathy and active assistance. In India, do we not need more willingness to suffer patiently for Christ, with less readiness to have recourse to the secular arm?

**The defence and confirmation, etc.]** Here we have the two sides of the evangelist's work, the defensive and the offensive. The 'defence' or 'vindication' includes removing obstacles and overcoming prejudices. A comparison of the passages in which the word occurs shows us that St. Paul vindicated the truth before the Jews (Acts xxii. 1); before governors (Acts xxv. 16); before false teachers (1 Cor. ix. 3); and before Roman emperors and citizens (2 Tim. iv. 16; Phil. i. 7, 16). We are to defend the truth, if need be, as against Church and State, open enemies and false friends; and St. Peter bids us vindicate it before all men (1 Pet. iii. 15).

**Confirmation]** Speaks of direct advance and wise 'establishment' of the work. The word is only used again in Heb. vi. 16. As Conybeare and Howson remark, 'St. Paul defended his doctrine by his words and confirmed it by his life'.

\* **Ye all are partakers with me of grace]** More literally, 'co-partners of my grace as ye all are'. This word 'co-partners', one of the 'fellowship' words of the Epistle (see Introd. VI), is found in three other passages only. By collating them, we see that Christians are co-partners of

- (a) The root and fatness of the olive tree. Rom. xi. 17.
- (b) The Gospel and its happy service. 1 Cor. ix. 23.
- (c) The special grace of missionary labour. Phil. i. 7.
- (d) The cross now and kingdom afterwards. Rev. i. 9.

**Of grace]** This may be taken generally to denote the grace of salvation, sanctification, service, and missionary privilege. The occurrence of the cognate verb in v. 29 (ἐχαρίσθη) would perhaps narrow its meaning here to the special boon of being allowed to confirm the Gospel by sufferings. See also Eph. iii. 2, 8. Not every one would call bonds and sufferings by the sweet name of 'grace'.

**8. God is my witness]** St. Paul, as a missionary, invokes God as 'witness' to

- (a) His prayer for the converts. Rom. i. 9.



witness, how I long after you all in the tender mercies of Christ Jesus. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more 9

(b) His longing desire for them. Phil. i. 8.

(c) His sincerity in work. 1 Thes. ii. 5.

(d) His consistent conduct. 1 Thes. ii. 10.

This four-fold invocation may well furnish food for reflection alike for European missionaries and for Indian workers.

**Long after]** Better, 'yearn eagerly'. It denotes a sort of home-sick longing, and is used in the New Testament of

(a) Absent friends yearning over each other. Rom. i. 11 ; 2 Cor. ix. 14 ; ch. ii. 26 ; 1 Thes. iii. 6 ; 2 Tim. i. 4.

(b) The believer yearning for his home and rest above. 2 Cor. v. 2.

(c) The Spirit yearning to possess the souls of men. Jas. iv. 5.

(d) The Christian yearning for the Word of God. 1 Pet. ii. 2.

**In the tender mercies of Christ Jesus]** Literally, 'in the bowels'. The word here used denoted, classically, 'the nobler viscera, heart, lungs, liver, etc'. The Greeks looked on these as the seat of the affections. Hence the word may well be rendered 'heart'. Lightfoot beautifully paraphrases, 'Did I speak of having you in my own heart? I should rather have said that in the heart of Christ Jesus I long for you'; and he adds 'The believer has no yearnings apart from his Lord; his pulse beats with the pulse of Christ; his heart throbs with the heart of Christ'.

In the matchless prayer contained in v. 9-11, we have a *petition*, in order to a *process*, in view of a *purpose*.

**9. This I pray that]** The word 'that' would, classically, indicate purpose, 'in order that', and perhaps we have here the object of the Apostle's prayer, the end which he had in view. But, in later Greek, it is often used in the sense of purport, so that it possibly denotes here the substance of the prayer.

**That your love may abound yet more and more]** Here is the *petition*, — 'Love' in its largest sense, to God and man, but with a special reference, doubtless, to the internal dissensions in the Church. 'Abound', for, though they have some love, they need abounding love. When love abounds, converts will abound. When love abounds, the caste-spirit will disappear.

**More and more]** This is the only occurrence of this exact phrase in the New Testament. The expression in 1 Thes. iv. 1, 10 is less strong, though similar, in the Greek. If nothing else abounds 'more and more', at least let love! 'The fire in the Apostle never says "enough"'. (Bengel.)

and more in knowledge and all discernment;  
 10 so that ye may <sup>4</sup>approve the things that are <sup>4</sup>Or, prove the things that differ.

**Knowledge]** The word employed (*ἐπίγνωσις*) denotes 'full knowledge', and, in the New Testament, 'spiritual knowledge'. So far from being 'agnostics', who can know nothing certainly of God, we are to be 'epignostics' with full, clear, knowledge of His character and will, spiritually apprehended. We see that christian love is not to be blind, but intelligent, with both eyes wide open.

We must distinguish this 'spiritual knowledge' from the Jñāna of Hinduism. The latter, which is regarded as the *summum bonum* or highest attainment of religion by thousands in India, denotes rather a cold, philosophical knowledge derived from abstract meditation. The former indicates a spiritual grasp of the truths of revealed religion by a warm responsive heart, such a grasp as elevates the whole man and, as the following words declare, finds its natural expression in holiness of life. For the Christian, true knowledge is only the means to an end, that end being the total transformation of character and life.

**And all discernment]** or, 'perception'. While the former word 'knowledge' relates to general principles, this one has regard to the practical application of those principles. Our love is to be seen in delicate and fine tact, and in sanctified common sense. We are to perceive, with keen insight, the bearings and tendencies of things, whether in doctrine or practice, and know how to treat them accordingly. This word does not occur again in the New Testament, but a cognate form is used of the organs of moral sense in Heb. v. 14.

The 'all' suggests the need of this 'perception' under many circumstances and on divers occasions. Such practical perception is greatly needed in facing the problems which confront the Infant Church of India, as well as in evangelistic efforts among non-Christians.

**10. So that ye approve the things that are excellent]** Here follows the *process*, to which the *petition* was directed. The equipment of abounding, intelligent love is to be used now in processes of discrimination and approving choice. Two renderings are possible.

(a) *That ye may test the things that differ*, as the magnet discriminates between iron and other metals; 'sifting truth and holiness from their counterfeits' (Moule). For this rendering 'test', other occurrences of the verb may be cited in the New Testament (Luke xiv. 19; 1 Cor. iii. 13; xi. 28; Gal. vi. 4; 1 Thes. ii. 4; v. 21), while the translation 'differ' is supported by 1 Cor. xv. 41; Gal. iv. 1.

5 Gr. *fruit*, excellent; that ye may be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ; being filled with 11 the <sup>5</sup> fruits of righteousness, which are through

- (b) *That ye may approve the things that transcend*, always laying the hand of approving claim on the higher riches of grace; not content with a lower experience, but, by a true spiritual instinct, ever choosing and approving and enjoying the grander and fuller gifts bestowed on us 'for life and godliness' (2 Pet. i. 3; Eph. i. 18, 19; Heb. vi. 1; etc.) This sense of 'approve' is confirmed by such passages as Rom. i. 28; 1 Cor. xvi. 3; while the translation 'transcend' is favoured by Matt. vi. 26 x. 31; xii. 12; Gal. ii. 6.

This latter rendering is preferred by our revisers, and also by Bishop Lightfoot, but both translations are allowable. A strictly parallel passage is Rom. ii. 18, which is also capable of the double interpretation.

**That ye may be sincere]** Here begins the statement of the *purpose* which is in view as the result of the *process*. It is ushered in by the Greek conjunction of purpose 'in order that'; and it is seen to be twofold, namely, holiness and fruitfulness.

'Sincere' or rather 'unmixed, without alloy, distinct, unsullied'.

Three derivations of this word (*εἰλικρινής*) have been suggested.

- (a) From a root (*εἴλη*) meaning 'a troop, or a company', the word thus denoting the orderly separateness of marshalled ranks, men standing shoulder to shoulder, but distinct from any motley crowd which may surround them. Here is a thought for Christian soldiers, separate from the world, fighting the battles of their Lord. It appeals to us in India; we are among the heathen, but we must be separate from heathenism. Let the Church be free from all alloy of heathen customs.
- (b) From a word (*εἴλη*) meaning 'sunlight', the idea then being that of a substance 'examined by the sun, tested, and found pure all pollution having been detected and put away'. Here is a thought for Christian saints, searched and purified by the Sun of Righteousness.
- (c) From the verb (*εἰλίσσω*), 'to roll round and round', giving the idea of 'separated or sifted by rolling', and so left unmixed and pure. Here is a thought for Christian sufferers, whirled round in the sieve of trial, so as to separate all chaff from them. They are purified from alloy as gold is separated from quartz in the goldfields by crushing and washing.

Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

**12** Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things

Of these three interpretations, the first is the most irreproachable, so far as scholarship is concerned.

**Void of offence]** The word bears a double meaning, indicating either (intransitively) 'without stumbling'; or (transitively) 'without causing others to stumble'. Both senses, surely, are in place. Christians are to go forward without any hindrance such as unbelief or disobedience would occasion them: and they are to be careful lest, by inconsistency of conduct, they place obstacles in the way of others. In this country, Hindus and Muhammadans are watching us; let us beware lest we hinder them.

While the former word 'sincere' emphasizes character, this one emphasizes conduct.

**Unto the day of Christ]** The same expression occurs in ii. 16. This is to be our present experience, with the *day* ever in view. We are to be unsullied now, and without stumbling now, in order that, when the Lord comes, we may meet Him with joy, and not with shame. For the 'day of Christ', see note on v. 6.

**11. Being filled]** Literally, 'having been filled' (the fulness still continuing). True holiness will always lead to fruitfulness. If the adjusting and approving of vv. 9, 10 do not produce fulness of fruit, they have failed in their purpose. God's trees are to be kept always laden with fruit, day by day.

**The fruits of righteousness]** Literally, the 'fruit' (in the singular) as in Gal. v. 22. The expression is found again in Jas. iii. 18 (cf. Heb. xii. 11), and is possibly derived from the LXX. (Prov. xi. 30; xiii. 2; Amos vi. 12). So far as the structure of the phrase itself is concerned, it may mean either 'the fruit which is righteousness', or 'the fruit which righteousness produces'. The analogy of such expressions as 'the fruit of the Spirit' (Gal. v. 22), and 'the fruit of the light' (Eph. v. 9) would seem to decide in favour of the second meaning. It thus denotes the fruit of righteousness, the righteousness of Christ, imputed to the believer at his justification and imparted to him by the Spirit day by day in sanctification, fruit which is seen alike in transformed character and consistent conduct, in happy witness and in faithful service. (Isaiah xxxii. 16, 17).

**Through Jesus Christ]** The condition for such fruit-bearing is union with Christ. The whole teaching of John, xv. 1-16 is in point here.

United with and abiding in Him, we receive power, by the continual impartation of His life and Spirit, to bring forth fruit, 'much fruit'.

*which happened* unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel; so that my bonds became manifest in 13

**Unto the glory and praise of God]** The one true end and object of the Christian's life. Holiness and fruitfulness are not intended for our own comfort and enjoyment, but for God's sole glory. Here is a grand motto for missionary life and service. Here, again, is the *raison d'être* of the Indian Church, that God may be glorified in this land, aye! and beyond it.

**Glory]** denotes the manifestation of the Divine attributes.

**Praise]** speaks of the admiration and benediction of those attributes by His creatures (cf. Eph. i. 6).

#### 12-26. PERSONAL. ST. PAUL'S BONDS AND WORK

This section tells us of his *bonds* (vv. 12-14); his *rivals* (vv. 15-18); his *suspense* (vv. 19-20); his *choice* (vv. 21-4); and his *confidence* vv. 25-6).

**12. The things which happened unto me]** More literally, 'the things related to me,' i.e., 'my circumstances'. The phrase is found again in Eph. vi. 21; Col. iv. 7. How unlikely and untoward those circumstances seemed to human view! We need to look at all circumstances with the eye of faith, and to see God shaping them (Rom. viii. 28).

**Have fallen out, etc.].** Perfect tense, 'have come out, and are still proving to be'. The word 'rather' implies a contrast, 'rather than the reverse, as might have been expected'.

**Unto the progress of the Gospel]** This word has a pioneer ring about it, being derived from a root meaning 'to cut away before one', 'to clear the way in front', as does a pioneer in the backwoods. The noun only occurs again in v. 25 and in 1 Tim. iv. 15; but the cognate verb is found in Luke ii. 52; Rom. xiii. 12; Gal. i. 14; 2 Tim. ii. 16; iii. 9, 13.

We need more pioneer evangelists in India; let us all pray and work 'for the progress of the Gospel', clearing the way in front for the further advance of our conquering Lord.

**13. My bonds became manifest in Christ]** Rather, 'became manifest (as being) in Christ', i.e., are clearly seen to have to do with Christ, and to be in consequence of union with Him, and not to be due to any social or political circumstances. St. Paul's bonds led to

(a) The gaoler's conversion in this very Philippi. Acts xvi. 26.

(b) Onesimus' salvation in the imperial city. Philem. 10, 11.

(c) Rome's being well evangelized. Phil. i. 7, 13, 14, 17.

Thus his very fetters preached Christ and worked for Christ.

6 Gr. *in the whole*  
14 *Prætorium.*

Christ <sup>6</sup> throughout the whole prætorian guard,  
and to all the rest; and that most of the brethren

**Throughout the whole prætorian guard]** Literally, 'in the whole Prætorium'. This word has been variously explained, as referring to

(a) *The imperial residence on the Palatine hill.*—This explanation probably follows the usage of the word in Matt. xxvii. 27; Mark xv. 16; John xviii. 28, 33; xix. 9; Acts xxiii. 35; where it is used of the palace of a king or governor.

But no evidence can be adduced of the use of the word in connexion with Cæsar's palace.

(b) *The Prætorian barracks attached to the imperial palace.*—This suggestion, also, is without historical authority.

(c) *The camp of the Prætorian soldiers outside the Colline gate of the city.*—There is more to be said in favour of this opinion, but it, likewise, lacks external support.

(d) *The body of the Prætorian guards.*—The word being used not of a locality but of a regiment. This is the common usage of the term, and is amply supported by the Latin classics. It is rightly, therefore, adopted in the text.<sup>1</sup> It also harmonizes with Acts xxviii. 30, in which the Apostle is described as living 'in his own hired house'. Every warder of the Guard who came on duty to the prisoner heard the story of the Gospel and carried with him to his comrades something of the Apostle's message. Thus the main facts of the Christian revelation soon became known to the whole of the Imperial Guards, and we may well believe that some of those hardy soldiers became doughty champions of the Cross.

**To all the rest]** Cf. Luke xxiv. 9; 2 Cor. xiii. 2. Whether 'to all the rest of the Prætorian guards', other than those who visited the Apostle (so Conybeare and Howson); or 'to all other men, namely, the Roman public' (Moule); or, to 'other people in general'. As Lightfoot says, the expression is a comprehensive one and 'must not be too rigorously interpreted.'

**14. Most of the brethren]** The majority were fired into zeal, but a minority still hung back, whether from unwillingness, or unfriendliness,

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1. It should be mentioned, however, that Professor Mommsen, followed by Ramsay and others, regards the term as indicating 'the Prætorian Council' which consisted of the commanders of the Prætorian guards and their assistants. Paul's case would come before this Council. Mommsen thinks that he was not in the custody of the Prætorian guards, but in that of the corps of 'milites frumentarii', whose camp was on the Caelian hill.

in the Lord,<sup>7</sup> being confident through my bonds,  
are more abundantly bold to speak the word of  
God without fear. Some indeed preach Christ

*7 Gr. trusting  
in my bonds.*

15

or cowardice. The majorities of Scripture are often on the wrong side (see Acts xix. 32; xxvii. 12; 1 Cor. x. 5). Here it is otherwise.

**In the Lord]** Grammatically, this may be taken either with 'the brethren' as in the text, or with the words 'being confident' (see Gal. v. 10; 2 Thes. iii. 4; and cf. 1 Thes. ii. 2). On the whole, the former sense seems preferable. See note on ii. 19.

**Being confident through my bonds]** Literally, 'relying on my bonds', the bonds being the cause or ground of their confidence. Conybeare and Howson translate 'rendered confident by my chains', and this expresses the Apostle's meaning exactly. His 'bonds', standing for a glorious cause, and speaking of a glorious Person, evoked new zeal, especially when seen to be for the direct progress of the Gospel. Here was a man who gloried in wearing chains for Christ, and found his Saviour more than conqueror even in the imprisonment. Christian zeal and daring ought to be contagious.

**Are more abundantly bold]** Literally, 'venture (dare) more abundantly (than before)'. They grew more frequent, more open, more bold in their testimony. For some deeds of Christian daring, in which this same word is used, see

Mark xv. 43. Joseph going boldly to claim the body of Jesus.

Rom. v. 7. Men daring to die for their fellows.

2 Cor. x. 2. Teachers being courageous against error.

2 Cor. xi. 21-7. Evangelists daring to do and suffer for the truth.

Phil. i. 14. Believers waxing bold to testify to the Gospel.

**To speak the word of God]** The different titles of the 'word' in the New Testament will repay study. We have 'The word of God' (as here, the usual expression); 'The word of the kingdom' (Matt. xiii. 19); 'The word of the Gospel' (Acts xv. 7); 'The word of the cross', (1 Cor. i. 18); 'The word of the truth' (Eph. i. 13; etc.); 'The word of life' (Phil. ii. 16; 1. John i. 1); 'The word of Christ' (Col. iii. 16); 'The word of the Lord' (1 Thes. i. 8); and other expressions.

**Without fear]** An adverb only found four times in the New Testament. On the one hand, we have unworthy ministers 'feeding themselves without fear' (Jude 12); on the other hand, we have true Christians

(a) Serving God without fear. Luke i. 74.

(b) Working the work of the Lord without fear. 1 Cor. xvi. 10.

(c) Preaching the word without fear. Phil. i. 14.

**15. Some indeed preach, etc.]** Here are two sorts of preachers,

16 even of envy and strife; and some also of goodwill: the one *do it* of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of

actuated by two kinds of motives. The reference is, in the one case, to the Judaizing party in the Roman Church alluded to again in iii. 2-15. The Epistle to the Romans (see chs. ii, iv) shows their position and influence there. They accepted the Gospel, but insisted that circumcision was essential and that the Mosaic law was permanently binding. They were Christians bound about with Mosaic grave-clothes, and their party spirit was extremely strong. They preached 'the Christ' (mark the force of the definite article which occurs here, from a Jewish standpoint), but they clung to their exclusively Hebrew interpretation of the term. Let us beware, in India, lest we rear up Christians bound about with Hindu grave-clothes, or Muhammadan grave-clothes, or caste grave-clothes, or national custom grave-clothes.

**Even of envy and strife]** Better, 'actually from envy and contention', incredible though this may appear. The exact phrase 'from envy' is found again only in Matt. xxvii. 18; Mark. xv. 10, a sad parallel. They were actuated by jealousy of the Apostle's influence, and by that contentious spirit which sought to gain adherents to their circumcision party. We need, in this country, to be delivered from envy of others who 'follow not with us', and from the sectarian spirit which exalts any one external organization as essential to salvation. The 'clash of Churches' is by all means to be deplored and avoided; and, while we are loyal in our attachment to our own Church, let us see to it that we are loving and liberal in our bearing towards others.

**And some also of goodwill]** More correctly, 'and some as truly from goodwill'. The word here translated 'goodwill' means, in the New Testament, either a person's 'good pleasure', i.e., what is pleasing in his eyes (Matt. xi. 26; Luke x. 21; Eph. i. 5, 9; Phil. ii. 13); or, his 'benevolent goodwill' (Rom. x. 1; and, possibly, Luke ii. 14; 2 Thes. i. 11). In this passage, both ideas seem to be combined.

They preached Christ from their own choice and 'good pleasure', and also with the 'benevolent desire' of doing good to their fellow-men, as well as cheering the Apostle. Bishop Moule calls it 'the goodwill of loyalty.'

**16. I am set]** 'The thought is as of a soldier posted, a line of defence laid down' (Moule). It would appeal to the Philippians as Roman citizens, placed to defend the Empire on its outlying boundaries. If we examine the occurrences of this verb in the original, we shall find that the Christian is set

(a) To give light. Matt. v. 14.

(b) To defend the Gospel. Phil. i. 16.



sincerely, thinking to raise up affliction for me in my bonds. **17** What then? only that in every way, whether in pretence or **18** in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice, yea, and

(c) To endure afflictions. 1 Thes. iii. 3 (Cf. Luke ii. 34).

The word also contains something of the idea of prostration in it. We must humble ourselves to the dust if we would be good defenders of the Gospel, as the soldier often has to lie down flat when he shoots or receives fire.

**The defence]** See v. 7, where same word occurs. The sight of this solitary prisoner, so nobly holding the fort for Christ (cf. 2 Sam. xxiii. 11, 12) and vindicating the cause of the Gospel against all comers, may well have stirred all who loved God and souls to the emprise of noble deeds.

**17. Proclaim]** Or, 'announce'. It really means 'to declare tidings as a messenger'. The word 'preach', previously used in v. 15, means 'to proclaim as a herald'.

**Of faction]** Or, 'partizanship'. The Greek word, thus translated, originally denoted 'labour for wages', and then came to indicate 'canvassing for office', finally passing into the meaning of party spirit. Conybeare and Howson render 'a spirit of intrigue'. All the mean anger of day-labourers quarreling over their hire, all the heat of a political canvass, was imported into the partizan activities of the Judaizers. The word is used again ii. 3.

**Not sincerely]** Literally, 'not purely', i.e., with mixed and impure motives. The word cuts at the root of all sordid considerations in Christian work, as well as sectarian spirit. To serve God merely for the sake of emolument, or in order to educate our children, is not to serve Him 'purely'.

**To raise up affliction for me in my bonds]** Whether by promoting 'the gathering opposition to the Apostle's doctrine of liberty', and so annoying him (Lightfoot); or 'by preventing the access of inquirers or converts to him' (Moule); or by 'accusing him of teaching a false and anti-national doctrine and so exciting odium against him among the Christians of Jewish birth in Rome' (Conybeare and Howson); or by a combination of all these, with a view to discrediting his authority and dividing the Church. Lightfoot renders 'to make my chains gall me', giving to the word for affliction (*θλίψις*) its original meaning of 'rubbing', 'pressure'.

**18. What then? only that, etc.]** As though to say 'What matters it? It matters not, for I, Christ's bondsman, am nothing, and their

**19 will rejoice.** For I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through your supplication and the supply of the Spirit of

opposition to me is best ignored. And yet in one way it does matter, and 'only' in one way, namely, that it makes my Master known and helps forward His cause'.

**In pretence]** The word means, primarily, 'an ostensible purpose', put forward, usually, as a cloak for other designs. The most lawful things may be thus deceitfully employed. For example, we have

- |     |                        |                            |
|-----|------------------------|----------------------------|
| (a) | The pretext of prayer. | Mark xii. 40; Luke xx. 47. |
| (b) | " " of work.           | Acts xxvii. 30.            |
| (c) | " " of preaching.      | 1 Thes. ii. 5, and here.   |
| (d) | " " of ignorance.      | John xv. 22.               |

The Greek word used in all these verses is the same as here.

**Proclaimed]** Or, 'announced', the same word as in v. 17.

**I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice]** Better, 'I do rejoice; aye! and rejoice I shall'. The abrupt language shows the conflicting feelings in St. Paul's heart, and tells how he got victory over self in the conflict. The vassal could rejoice in his Lord's honour, even though it seemed to bring dishonour to himself (cf. John iii. 29, 30). How absolutely he suppresses his personal feeling as he recognizes a new opportunity for glorifying his Master! He could rejoice heartily in the preaching of these men, however unworthy their motive, in so far as it made the truth of Christ known to the heathen. It was not now a question of defending the liberty of the Gospel against their distinctive Judaistic doctrine, as in the case of the Galatians, with a holy zeal for the purity of the Church; it was solely a question of evangelizing the heathen.

**19. This]** That is 'these present circumstances' of trial and suffering; this prison condition of bonds, with all its attendant gall and bitterness.

**Shall turn to my salvation]** Better, 'Shall issue, as regards me, in salvation'. This appears to be a quotation, however unconsciously made, from the LXX of Job xiii. 16.

The word 'salvation' here cannot denote, as some have thought, his personal safety. It is probably used in the sense of 'final salvation', as in v. 28 (cf. iii. 20), with its accompaniment of heavenly glory. This is the great issue before the true believer (Rom. xiii. 11; 1 Thess. v. 8; Heb. ix. 28; 1 Pet. i. 5). It will include, also, the idea of the development of his spiritual life by the discipline of trial. Such victories over self as he had just won were fresh appropriations of God's saving power and grace. Salvation is a process as well as an event (cf. Acts ii. 47. R. V.).

Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope, 20 that in nothing shall I be put to shame, but *that* with all boldness, as always, *so* now also Christ shall be magnified in

**Through your supplication]** The same word as in v. 4. He had made his 'request' for them; let them make their 'request' for him. St. Paul, in his Epistles, often asks prayer for himself (e.g., Rom. xv. 30; Eph. vi. 18, 19; Col. iv. 2, 3; etc.).

The same definite article, in the Greek, stands for both this and the following clause, implying that the supply of the Spirit is given in response to their prayer; their supplication and God's supply are the two sides of one and the same transaction.

**The supply]** The Greek word indicates a 'bounteous supply', or, an 'additional supply'. It is only used again in Eph. iv. 16, and is a stronger form of a term which was employed to express 'the defraying of the expenses of solemn public choruses'. The Apostle had already received a copious supply of the Spirit's grace and power. Here he expects, in answer to their prayer, an 'additional supply', a new and bountiful outpouring of the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ, that Paraclete who comes from Jesus Christ and reveals Him in the believer's heart.

**Supply of the Spirit, etc.]** The genitive may be either subjective or objective. If the former, we shall have the sense 'the bounteous supply which the Spirit gives', and, adopting this, Conybeare and Howson translate 'the supply of all my needs by the Spirit of Jesus Christ'.

If, on the other hand, we adopt the alternative view, we shall have the sense 'the bounteous supply which is the Spirit', and this implies a further and fuller reception of the Holy Paraclete into the soul. Both meanings well fit the context. A fuller supply of the Spirit will necessarily bring a fuller supplying of all our needs. Let every Christian in India seek this 'additional supply'. So shall power and blessing be ours (Acts i. 8; iv. 31-33).

**20. According to my earnest expectation]** That is 'such a supply of the Spirit will be in accordance with my earnest expectation'.

The word 'earnest expectation' is only used again in Rom. viii. 19, and means 'eagerly waiting with outstretched head', like one craning forward to watch a race; with the idea also of complete absorption of interest in the object contemplated. It would be difficult to find another word so fully expressing the entire concentration of eager desire. The two passages in which it is used suggest that the Christian's whole soul should be set on a two-fold object, viz., the glory of Christ in our life now (Phil. i. 20), and the Coming of Christ, with all its attendant blessings, hereafter (Rom. viii. 19)

21 my body, whether by life, or by death. For to me to live is

**That in nothing shall I be put to shame]** Notice the occurrences of the word 'nothing', in this Epistle.

(a) In nothing put to shame. i. 20.

(b) In nothing affrighted. i. 28.

(c) Doing nothing through faction or vain glory. ii. 3.

(d) In nothing be anxious. iv. 6.

Moule points out that the word 'put to shame' practically means, in this verse, 'disappointed', with the shame of a miscalculation.

**With all boldness]** The root idea of this word, a favourite one with St. Paul, is boldness of speech. This is its classical meaning, and it is clearly present in the New Testament also (see Acts iv. 13, 29, 31; Eph. vi. 19; etc.). St. Paul's 'additional supply' of the Spirit would lead to additional boldness in testimony. The word is contrasted here with 'shame'.

**Christ shall be magnified]** We might have expected the first person, 'with all boldness I may work'. But, no, the Apostle hides himself to show his Lord, a practical illustration of his own adage, 'not I, but Christ' (Gal. ii. 20). Cf. John iii. 30. The order of the words in the original emphasizes this thought.

**In my body]** The believer's body is to be yielded up as the Spirit's instrument (Rom. vi. 13; xii. 1; 1 Cor. vi. 20; 2 Cor. iv. 10). A marvelous thought, that He, the High and Holy, can be magnified by our poor bodies. How different is this teaching from that of the Hindu philosopher who regards embodiment as evil.

**Whether by life or by death]** Here the terrible suspense of that crisis in his history peeps out, but he faces it gladly and fearlessly.

**21. For, to me]** The 'me' is very emphatic in the Greek. St. Paul would say 'Whatever it may be to others, to me at least to live is Christ, etc.' It is not egotism, but emphatic personal conviction and experience.

**To live is Christ]** Or, to put it even more tersely, 'life is Christ'. The whole of life, with its experiences and interests, is summed up for the believer in that word which recurs so constantly in this Epistle, 'Christ'. Cf. Gal. ii. 20; Col. iii. 4. Apart from Him, it is not life to live. To hold fellowship with Him, to serve Him, to have Him as the supreme Interest in everything, this is life indeed. The tense of the verb here marks the continual process of living.

This fact differentiates Christianity from all other religions. No other religionist can truly state that life for him consists in union with a living personal Lord.

8 Or, *But if to live in the flesh (be my lot), this is the fruit of my work: and what I shall choose I wot not,*

9 Or, *what shall I choose?*

10 Or, *I do not make known.*

Christ, and to die is gain. 8 But if to live in the 22 flesh,—if this is the fruit of my work, then 9 what I shall choose 10 I wot not. But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to 23

**To die is gain]** Or, more briefly, 'death is gain'. The tense (Aorist infinitive) is in striking contrast to that of the previous verb 'to live'. It denotes the crisis of dying, or perhaps rather the result of dying, the state after death (see v. 23). To the true Christian death's sting is gone, and it is only the gate to the immediate presence of the King. The noun 'gain' is only used three times in the New Testament, though the cognate verb occurs fifteen times, e.g., in iii. 8.

We have,

(a) The shameful gain of avarice. Tit. i. 11.

(b) The useless gains of mere religiousness. Phil. iii. 7.

(c) The glorious gain of eternal bliss. Phil. i. 21.

**22. But if to live in the flesh, if this, etc.]** The construction of this verse is broken and reflects the disturbed state of the Apostle's feelings. It is a difficult one to translate and various renderings have been suggested. Besides the one adopted in the text, the following have been strongly advocated.

(a) '*But what if my living in the flesh will bear fruit through my labours? In fact, what to choose I wot not.*'

This, treating the first clause as a question, is Bishop Lightfoot's solution, and gives excellent sense.

(b) '*But if to live in the flesh (be my lot), this is the fruit of my works; and what I shall choose I wot not.*'—This is the reading of R. V. margin, and also gives a clear meaning, though it requires the mental ellipsis to be supplied. It is tantamount to saying, 'If it be God's will for me still to continue in the flesh, my prolonged life will bring fresh opportunities for serving Christ and bearing fruit for Him. This were good indeed. And yet to depart and be with Him were good also. So what to choose I do not see clearly (*γνωρίζω*—recognize, as though looking for a familiar face).'

Either (a) or (b) may be adopted. The sense is practically the same in the two, and seems clearer than that of the R. V. text. True life in Christ finds its natural expression in fruitful labours.

**23. But I am in a strait betwixt the two]** Better, 'Nay, I am hemmed

24 depart and be with Christ ; for it is very far better : yet to  
 25 abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake. And having

in (restricted) from the two (sides)'. From either side he was pressed and confined like a man between two walls (cf. Num. xxii. 26). The two horns of the dilemma held him fast. He had to choose between two immense blessings, living the fruit-life for Christ here, and enjoying the bliss-life with Christ there. This word 'hemmed in' is used in the New Testament of—

- (a) Those 'held' by diseases and torments. Matt. iv. 24 ; Luke iv. 38 ; Acts xxviii. 8.
- (b) The Gadarenes 'pressed' by great fear. Luke viii. 37.
- (c) Christ 'straitened' till His baptism of blood should be accomplished. Luke xii. 50.
- (d) Paul 'constrained' by the Word to a passionate desire for souls. Acts xviii. 5.
- (e) One 'hard pressed' by conflicting wishes. Phil. i. 23.

**Having the desire]** All his personal inclination lay in the direction of departing. This was his one desire. But a sense of duty pulled him in the opposite direction. The word rendered 'desire' denotes a very strong longing.

**To depart]** Literally 'break up'. The word is used of the 'breaking up' of an encampment, the 'striking' of a tent, or the 'unmooring' of a vessel. St. Paul earnestly desired to weigh anchor, to remove his tent, and to 'go home' to be with Christ. (Cf. 2 Cor. v. 1-8.) The word only occurs again in Luke xii. 36, of the Lord returning (i.e., leaving the far country and 'starting out') from the wedding. The corresponding noun is found once only, in 2 Tim. iv. 6, where also departure from the body is intended.

**And be with Christ]** The believer passes, when he dies, straight to the presence of his Lord (See 2 Cor. v. 6-8). Whatever the intermediate state may mean for him, at least it means this. Even now he is 'with Christ', in a spiritual sense, by faith. Then he will be 'with Christ', in a still closer sense, by sight. How different is this joyous assurance of certain bliss, should death come, from the Hindu's dreary and uncertain looking forward to an almost endless succession of penal births and re-embodiments. It condemns also the Vedantic doctrine of absorption into a supreme impersonal spirit.

**For it is very far better]** Literally, 'for it is much rather better'. Word is piled on word in a triple comparative. The comparison gathers force if we remember that this passing to the Presence of

this confidence, I know that I shall abide, yea, and abide with  
 you all, for your progress and joy <sup>11</sup> in the faith;  
<sup>11</sup> Or, *of faith*. that your glorying may abound in Christ Jesus **26**

Christ is represented as 'far, far better' than even a happy life of holy fruitfulness on earth.

**24. To abide in the flesh]** Another reading is 'To abide by the flesh', i.e., to hold fast to this present life, with all its conditions of trial and discipline.

**More needful]** Or, 'more necessary'. Notice the comparative degree and contrast it with the one in v. 23.

It would be 'very far better' for him to go.

It was 'more necessary' for them that he should stay.

The balance of personal advantage is on the one side; that of obligation is on the other; and the latter must weigh down the scale.

**For your sake]** This Missionary is influenced by no personal considerations. Other interests are paramount with him.

(a) 'For the Gospel's sake'. 1 Cor. ix. 23.

(b) 'For your sake' (here).

**25. Having this confidence]** The same word as in v. 6. St. Paul's 'confidence' in this Epistle is remarkable. See i. 6. 25; ii. 24; iii. 3, 4.

**I know]** The expression of a strong personal conviction. It is noteworthy that the very same word is used in Acts xx. 25, in the statement of a contrary assurance. The expectation here expressed was afterwards fulfilled, as we gather from 1 Tim. i. 3. What then of the conviction of Acts xx. 25? Lightfoot and others are of opinion that it was 'overruled by events'. It may be, however, that it was verified in some way unknown to us, though the evidence seems conclusive for a later visit of the Apostle to Ephesus. But, at least, the prediction of the present verse was fulfilled.

**I shall abide, yea, and abide with you all]** While the similar verb in v. 24 may be rendered by 'stay on' (stay on in the flesh), the two words here used may be represented by 'stay, yea, and stay alongside you all', i.e., 'stay, or abide in life, and stay side by side with you'. The latter of the two verbs here employed means 'to abide with certain persons, or in certain relations'. Here it signifies to continue by their side as teacher, helper, comrade.

**For your progress and joy in the faith]** The word 'progress' is the same as the one in v. 12. 'Faith' is to be connected with both progress and joy, and may possibly denote, as interpreted in the text,

in me through my presence with you again.

- 27 Only <sup>12</sup> let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ: that, whether I come and

*12 Gr. behave as citizens worthily.*

the creed of Christianity. On the other hand, it may stand for the personal trust of believers, and then the phrase will mean 'Your advance in the life of trust, and your joy which springs from so trusting'. Cf. 2 Thes. i. 3; Rom. xv. 13; 1 Pet. i. 8.

Notice, in this verse, the joy of the Christian emphasized again (Intro. VI).

**26. That your glorying]** This word 'glorying', occurs in Rom. iv. 2; 1 Cor. v. 6; ix. 15, 16; 2 Cor. i. 14; v. 12; ix. 3; Gal. vi. 4; ch. ii. 16; Heb. iii. 6. A cognate noun and the corresponding verb are found frequently in Rom., Cor., Gal., but only once in Ephes. This fact appears to shew that this Epistle is linked with those of the Third Apostolic Journey, and so gives a little clue as to its date (Intro. III).

The sense here is 'in order that you may have cause for exultation in me, when you see the Lord's grace displayed in me and through me.'

**May abound]** Same word as in v. 9, a favourite one with St. Paul, who uses it no less than twenty-six times in his Epistles. In this Epistle alone it occurs five times, i. 9, 26; iv. 12 (twice), 18.

**In Christ Jesus]** As the sphere of their exultation. St. Paul continually emphasizes the fact that all the Christian's experiences are to be 'in the Lord', as united with Him by faith. (Note on ii. 19).

**In me]** As the object immediately exciting their gratitude and praise. The Apostle would be the occasion of their exultation when Christ graciously restored him to his anxious friends.

**Through my presence with you again]** That is, 'by my presence again among you'. The word 'presence', or 'coming to be present', is generally used in the New Testament of the Second Advent of our Lord. The Apostle employs it once again in this Epistle, in ii. 12, and there also of his own presence.

#### 27-30. EXHORTATION TO CONSISTENCY AND COURAGE

**27. Only]** That is, 'whether you see me again or not.' For this use of 'only', suggesting an ellipsis, cf. Gal. ii. 10; v. 13; vi. 12; 2 Thes. ii. 7; and, possibly, 1 Cor. vii. 39.

**Let your manner of life, etc.]** Literally, 'Live your citizen-life in a way worthy of the Gospel of Christ'. St. Paul, writing from the



see you or be absent, I may hear of your state, that

metropolis of the Empire to Christians living in a Roman colony, appropriately uses the figure of citizenship in addressing them (See also iii. 20). When at Philippi, he had himself claimed the privilege of a Roman citizen (Acts xvi. 37-39). The Christian, too, has a Metropolitan City, and rights, duties, and privileges as a citizen of that City (Gal. iv. 26). The verb here employed means 'to perform duties as a citizen'. It only occurs again in Acts xxiii. 1, where St. Paul uses the word in a more general sense of performing his duties faithfully as a member of the Jewish Theocracy. A corresponding noun is found in Acts xxii. 28; Eph. ii. 12; while the word 'citizen' occurs in Luke xv. 15; xix. 14; Acts xxi. 39; and the word 'fellow-citizen' in Eph. ii. 19. To 'play the citizen well for Christ', they must lead consistent lives, bravely display His banner, and do and suffer for His cause. Conybeare and Howson render 'Only live worthy of the Glad-tidings of Christ.'

It is interesting to note that Polycarp, in writing later to this very Church, uses the same metaphor, 'if we perform our duties under Him as simple citizens, He will promote us to a share of His sovereignty.'

**Worthy of the Gospel]** i.e., befitting the Glad-tidings which assure you of your heavenly citizenship. This adverb 'worthily' is found six times in the New Testament.

(a) Receiving fellow-Christians 'worthily of the Saints'. Rom. xvi. 2.

(b) Walking in daily life 'worthily' of the Calling. Eph. iv. 1.

(c) Living as heavenly citizens 'worthily' of the Gospel (here).

(d) Conducting ourselves in all things 'worthily' of the Lord. Col. i. 10.

(e) Behaving and shewing hospitality 'worthily' of God. 1 Thes. ii. 12; 3 John 6.

**Your state]** Literally, 'the things concerning you', i.e., your circumstances, etc. The exact phrase is found again in ii. 19, 20, and in Eph. vi. 22.

**That ye stand fast]** This verb 'stand fast' is used eight times in the New Testament. In Mark xi. 25, it apparently indicates the simple act of 'standing', but in the other seven passages it means 'to stand firm, with a good foot-hold', 'to hold one's ground'.

'Stand fast and firmly' (a) (used absolutely), Rom. xiv. 4; 2 Thes. ii. 15; (b) in the faith. 1 Cor. xvi. 13; (c) in the liberty. Gal. v. 1; (d) in one spirit. Phil. i. 27; (e) in the Lord. Phil. iv. 1; 1 Thes. iii. 8.

The metaphor may have been taken from the Roman amphitheatre where men had to fight for dear life. A firm stand against everything

ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving<sup>13</sup> for the faith of the gospel; and in nothing affrighted by the adversaries: which is for them an evident token

28<sup>13</sup> Gr. *with*.

un-Christian is absolutely essential in order to the progress of the Gospel in India. Let us raise the standard of 'No Compromise.'

**In one spirit]** Many interpret this of the human spirit. So Lightfoot, 'acting by one inspiration'. But the identical phrase, in the original, is found again in 1 Cor. xii. 13; Eph. ii. 18, with an undoubted reference to the Holy Spirit of God. As the Divine Spirit, when received by faith, resides in and possesses the human spirit of the believer, and acts through that upon his life, the two interpretations are easily reconcilable. But the sense here seems clearly to be that the Philippian Christians, for unity and power, should stand firm, shoulder to shoulder, '*in the one Spirit*', Who is the true Uniter and Strengtheners.

**With one soul]** The phrase is found again in Acts iv. 32, 'one soul' in the Church. Here it is 'one soul' in the fight.

The word 'soul' naturally follows the word 'Spirit' as subordinate to and energized by it. The soul is the seat of the will, affections, passions, etc. The Holy Spirit, energizing and uniting their human spirits, would thus influence their will, love, desires, so as to move them in one and the same direction. Moule well paraphrases, 'with one life and love, the resultant of the one Spirit's work in you all.'

**Striving for]** The word is only found again in the New Testament in iv. 3. The metaphor is to be referred to the gladiatorial games of the Roman amphitheatre. Shoulder to shoulder, let them hold the ground against all odds and against every form of attack.

**For the faith]** Lightfoot translates 'in concert with the faith' (Cf. R. V. margin), as though the faith were personified as a comrade in the fight. But the context favours the emphasis on the fellowship of believers with one another as fellowsoldiers contending for the faith.

**The faith of the Gospel]** Meaning 'the faith which has to do with the Gospel'. While we are at liberty to understand this, if we will, as 'the creed of the Gospel', it seems even better to interpret it as meaning 'the faith which embraces the Gospel'. The verse then bids us to strive earnestly to bring men to believe the Gospel.

28. **In nothing]** See v. 20.

**Affrighted]** Lightfoot renders 'not blenching', 'not startled.' The metaphor is derived from the starting or scare of animals, especially from the shying of horses. It is found nowhere else in the Bible. We gather from Acts xvi that Philippi was a stormy place for God's flock to be

of perdition, but of your salvation, and that from God; because 29  
to you it hath been granted in the behalf of Christ, not only to

in, and that adversaries were plentiful there. These Christians were not to be scared out of their attitude of courageous calm by any sudden assault or danger (Cf. Luke xxi. 9-19, where the same word for adversaries is used in v. 15). This word 'adversary' (lit. one set against) is used elsewhere of

(a) The great opponent, the devil. 1 Tim. v. 14.

(b) The Anti-Christ. 2 Thes. ii. 4.

(c) The opponents of Christ and His Gospel. Luke xiii. 17; Luke xxi. 15; 1 Cor. xvi. 9.

**Which is]** The Greek means 'seeing it is of such a nature as to be'. The reference is naturally to the Philippians' courage, which spoke loudly as a witness to the truth; but some interpret it of the adversaries' enmity as being a sign of their coming perdition.

**An evident token]** The word denotes either 'a pointing out', or 'a laying information against some one' (Attic law term), or 'a demonstration'. The last of these is the sense here. The valour of the Christians was an omen demonstrating clearly what the final issue would be. Their bold front shewed that they knew themselves to be on the winning side. Let our calm assurance and brave bearing as Christ's witnesses in this land prove to non-Christians that we have no doubt about the final victory of the Gospel and that 'He must reign'.

The word is used of

(a) A demonstrating token of righteousness. Rom. iii. 25, 26.

(b) " " love. 2 Cor. viii. 24.

(c) " " perdition and salvation, (here).

**Perdition]** That is, 'everlasting loss and ruin.' Just as the firm front of believers is a sure evidence that they are on the right side, so is it also a token that defeat and ruin await their foes.

**Salvation]** That is, 'final and complete salvation' (See v. 19). As Christians rally round Christ's banner, and unite in soul and spirit for conflict and victory, they have a new evidence and assurance, and present it to the world, that glory is at hand. 'Victory, victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

**And that from God]** Lightfoot refers the 'that' to the 'evident token' as being a direct indication from God. He says, 'the Christian gladiator does not anxiously await the signal of life and death from the fickle crowd. The great Umpire Himself has given him a sure token of deliverance.'

30 believe on him, but also to suffer in his behalf: having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

We may, however, refer the word 'that' to the whole previous idea of 'opposition met in a way to encourage faith'. The 'that' would then denote 'this condition of conflict and courage', which is 'from God', and is no mere blind concurrence of circumstances but an integral part of His purpose for His people.

**29. It hath been granted]** The force of the word is 'granted as a boon'. Our being allowed to suffer on behalf of Christ is a gracious boon, as much a matter of grace (the verb here comes from the root grace),—see v. 7—as the forgiveness of the debt of sin (Luke vii. 42, 43; Eph. iv. 32; Col. ii. 13); or the gift of full salvation (Rom. viii. 32); or the great boon of the Holy Spirit of God (1 Cor. ii. 12); in all which verses, among other passages, this same verb is used.

**In the behalf of Christ]** The construction of the Greek here is curious. It would seem that St. Paul had at first intended to write simply 'It was graciously granted you on behalf of Christ to suffer', and had then paused to insert a further thought 'not only to believe in Him', before adding the final words. This has led to a repetition in the verse of the object of the sufferings, so that we get the two-fold phrase 'in the behalf of Christ,—in His behalf'.

The expression 'on behalf of Christ' is used in

(a) 2 Cor. v. 20. Ambassadors and pleaders on His behalf.

(b) 2 Cor. xii. 10. Believers and sufferers on His behalf. Phil. i. 29.

**To believe on Him]** The verb is in the present tense, and so indicates the constant and persistent exercise of faith. The Christian is to go on believing, moment by moment, deriving all he needs by faith from a full Christ (1 Cor. i. 30; John i. 16). The expression in the original 'to keep believing *into* Him' marks the going out of faith towards Christ in active trust and appropriation. 'The just shall live by faith', from first to last.

**Not only to believe, but also to suffer]** This phrase 'not only, but also' occurs again and again in the New Testament. The student is advised to collate and consider the various passages in which it is used; e.g., it is employed in connexion with

(a) True conversion. Acts xxvi. 29; 1 Thes. i. 5.

(b) Sanctification. Joh. xiii. 9; Rom. v. 3, 2 Cor. viii. 21; 2 Tim. ii. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 18.

(c) Life and service. Matt. xxi. 21; Acts xxi. 13; 2 Cor. viii. 10; ix. 12; Phil. i. 29; 1 Thes. ii. 8.

## 2. If there is therefore any comfort in Christ, if any<sup>1</sup>

(d) Evangelization. Joh. xi. 52 ; xvii. 20 ; Rom. iv. 12, 16, 23, 24 ; ix. 24 ; 1 Thes. i. 8 ; John ii. 2.

(e) The Second Advent. Rom. viii. 23 ; 2. Tim. iv. 8 ; Heb. xii. 26.

We must remember in India that we are called 'not only' to believe in Christ and to enjoy spiritual privileges. 'but also' to serve Him, to suffer for Him, to make His Gospel known, and to wait for His appearing. Let us teach non-Christians, too, that the Gospel is 'not only' a creed, one of many religions, 'but also', and essentially, a power, the only power for life and service.

**To suffer in His behalf]** It is interesting and instructive to notice, in the New Testament, the causes for which it is right for Christians to suffer. (Cf. note on iii. 10).

Acts ix. 16.	For His name's sake.
Phil. i. 29.	In the behalf of Christ.
2 Thes. i. 5.	For the kingdom of God.
2 Tim. i. 11, 12.	For the Gospel and its ministry.
1 Pet. ii. 19, 20 ; iii. 17.	For well-doing.
1 Pet. iii. 14.	For righteousness' sake.
1 Pet. iv. 15, 16.	As a Christian.
1 Pet. iv. 19.	According to the will of God.

**30. Having]** This may be taken (and perhaps the Greek construction requires us so to take it) with 'Stand fast—striving—and in nothing affrighted', in which case the intervening words are a parenthesis. Or it may be taken with 'it was granted you in the behalf of Christ, etc.', the words immediately preceding. This makes the grammar a little more irregular, but is not altogether foreign to St. Paul's style. The sense would then be 'It was granted you to believe and to suffer for Christ, thus experiencing the same trials as myself.'

**Conflict]** This word (*ἀγών*) 'contest', 'struggle', speaks alike of gladiatorial and athletic contests. It suits both the battle-field and the gymnasium. It is found again in Col. ii. 1 ; 1 Thes. ii. 2 ; 1 Tim. vi. 12 ; 2 Tim. iv. 7 ; Heb. xii. 1. A study of these passages will shew that the word is used as well of striving in prayer as of fighting for the Gospel in evangelistic work and of running the race of Christian life and service.

It is remarkable that Christ's 'struggle' alone is called 'agony' (*ἀγωνία*), Luke xxii. 44. It thus stands '*per se*', as the great conflict.

**Which ye saw in me]** That is, during the Apostle's first campaign in Philippi (Acts xvi). Cf. 1 Thes. ii. 2 (a reference to the same event) in

consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any  
 2 tender mercies and compassions, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be of

which it is remarkable that he uses the same word 'conflict'. The gaoler, especially, would recall the prison sufferings.

**And now hear to be in me]** In the captivity and trials of the Roman prison.

## CHAPTER II

### 1-4. EXHORTATION TO UNSELFISHNESS AND UNITY

These verses contain an earnest appeal to the Philippians, founded on their deepest religious convictions, to maintain peace and unity among themselves. If spiritual experiences do not result in brotherly love, there is something altogether wrong, for loyalty to Christ demands obedience to His 'new commandment' (John. xiii. 34, 35).

**1. Comfort in Christ]** This is capable of a double interpretation, according to our understanding of the word translated 'comfort'.

(a) Accepting the rendering 'comfort' of the text, and understanding it to mean 'the comfort of encouragement', we see the sense to be 'If there be such a thing as encouragement in Christ, strong comfort derived from our common union with Him, then, as partakers of that comfort, forget your differences, and fulfil my joy'.

(b) If, however, we render the word 'exhortation' (it is so translated in Acts iv. 36; xiii. 15; Rom. xii. 8; 2 Cor. viii. 17; 1 Thes. ii. 3; 1 Tim. iv. 13; Heb. xii. 5; xiii. 22), or 'intreaty' (as in 2 Cor. viii. 4), we arrive at the meaning 'If there be any power of appeal or exhortation (arising from your co-partnership in life and blessing) in Christ, if the grace which you enjoy in Him appeals to you with any force at all, then cease from divisions and fulfil my joy'.

In the one case, the argument rests on the strong comfort which is our's in Christ; in the other, it rests on the appeal which the fact of our union with Christ makes to us. Both thoughts are true.

Conybeare and Howson translate 'If you can be entreated in Christ'.

**Consolation of love]** This expression, also, carries a two-fold meaning.

(a) If we hold fast to the rendering 'consolation', then the sense is 'If there be such a thing as love's consolation, the tender comfort which love can give to one beloved, then give it to one another, and to me'.

the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord,

(b) If, however, we accept the alternative translation 'incentive, persuasion', the meaning will be 'If there be such a thing as love's incentive, if love exerts any power of persuasion upon you, then obey that constraining force and fulfil my joy'.

In the one case, love's tender sympathy is in view; in the other, its constraining power.

Conybeare and Howson have 'If you can be persuaded by love.'

**Fellowship of the Spirit]** Indicating, most probably, 'participation in the Spirit', in which case their co-partnership in His grace and gifts would be a strong incentive to unity. But it may denote 'fellowship or communion with the Spirit', and then His love would constrain them to peace and concord. A close parallel is 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

The word 'fellowship' occurs again in this Epistle in i. 5; iii. 10; where both partnership and participation are in view.

**Tender mercies and compassions]** For the former of these words, see note on i. 8. It stands for the 'affectionate yearnings of the heart'.

The other word, 'compassions,' is found again in Rom. xii. 1; 2 Cor. i. 3; Col. iii. 12; Heb. x. 28. It is derived ultimately from a Greek word meaning 'alas!', and denotes the tender pity which cries 'alas!' over the sorrows of others. In the New Testament, it is usually found in the plural, and may be rendered 'tender feelings of compassion'.

Looking back over the verse, we see that the Apostle bases his plea for unity on four great arguments.

- (a) A common participation in the comfort which Christ gives; or a loyal response to the claims laid upon us by our union with Him.
- (b) An all-round yielding to the tender promptings and constraining power of Christian love.
- (c) A co-partnership in the grace and gifts of the Spirit, and in His loving influences.
- (d) A ready obedience to the holy impulses of Christian sympathy and compassion.

He is really only asking that the grand doctrines of the Gospel may be translated into practice; and we have here, therefore, another call to see to it that we carry out in daily life the truths which we profess to hold. Let India behold the verities of the Gospel exemplified in the consistent lives of her own Christian sons and daughters.

**2. Fulfil ye my joy]** That is, 'Make my joy full'. He has joy in them already (i. 4); he would have full, complete joy, in seeing them

3<sup>1</sup> of one mind; *doing* nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *of the same mind*.

united. Let them, by forgetting their differences, fill his joy-cup to the very brim. He presents himself before them, so to speak, as a special object towards whom they are entreated to extend that 'comfort in Christ', that 'consolation of love', that 'fellowship of the Spirit', those 'tender mercies and compassions' which were appealed to in v. 1.

Does not a greater than Paul entreat His people 'fulfil ye My joy, by loving one another?' (John xv. 11, 12).

**That ye be]** For this use of 'that' as probably denoting the purport rather than the purpose of what is contemplated, see i. 9. We may translate here 'so as to be', or 'by being'.

**Of the same mind]** Literally, 'so as to mind the same thing'. When Christian hearts and wills and thoughts (see Introduction VI) are all directed one way and concentrated on one and the same object, unity will be a reality.

The same expression occurs again in iv. 2.

The construction of the Greek suggests that the clauses which follow are an expansion in detail of this main thought. If the general attitude of their mind be one of unity of aim and interests, the rest, 'having the same love', etc., will follow.

**Having the same love]** Like men who have drunk at one and the same great Fountain-head. They are to be filled with the same grand 'love of God' (Rom. v. 5), and then mutual love for one another is sure to follow. There is a reference back, too, to the 'consolation of love' of v. 1.

Here we have the unifying force of common and mutual love.

**Being of one accord]** More literally, 'of one soul', involving a perfect harmony of feelings and affections, like soldiers knit together by the same *esprit de corps*.

Here we have the unifying force of a common desire and will.

**Of one mind]** Literally, 'minding the one thing'. Cf. iii. 13. This indicates unity of thought and plan, directed to one end in view. Here we have the unifying force of a common view and aim.

Knit together in one common attitude of mind, actuated by one and the same constraining love, influenced by one and the same burning desire and zeal, intent on one and the same great end and aim, this were unity indeed!

**3. Nothing through faction or vainglory]** There is no verb in the original, and so the R. V. supplies 'doing'. Notice the total prohibition



counting other better than himself ; not looking each of you to 4

implied in the word 'nothing' ; the rule knows no exception. For 'nothing', see i. 20.

**Faction]** see i. 17, where the same word is used. It may possibly include self-seeking here as well as party-spirit, though the latter is the main idea.

**Vainglory]** This noun occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, but the corresponding adjective is found once, in Gal. v. 26. It is expressive of personal vanity and conceit.

It will be found that all divisions among Christians have their ultimate cause in one or other of these two evils : party-spirit and personal vanity. Let us beware, in our Indian congregations, of faction and party-spirit, whether arising from caste prejudices or family rivalries. The history of this country presents us with an object lesson of the evils which arise from racial and family feuds, so that to-day India is rather a conglomeration of peoples than a homogeneous nation. In the Christian Church, at least, let us follow a more excellent way.

Let us watch, too, against that spirit of self-seeking which insists on the chief seats in churches or the chief voice in Councils or the chief authority in congregations. Clergy and laity alike need to be on their guard against pride. The fact that, in many places, an unkind or disrespectful word spoken by others leads to divisions and almost interminable feuds in Christian congregations shews that this warning against personal pride needs strongly emphasizing.

**In lowliness of mind]** The definite article is affixed in the Greek and may be expressed by 'in your lowliness of mind'.

The word 'lowliness-of-mind' seems not to occur before New Testament times. The idea expressed by it was wholly repugnant to non-Christian Greeks, and its kindred words in their classics are used in a disparaging sense to denote what is mean, abject, and grovelling. It remained for Christ to raise humility to its proper place as one of the chiefest virtues. It was the Gospel which taught mankind that the way to true nobility of character is complete self-abnegation. We must learn of Christ the 'meek and lowly in heart', if we would have true humility. This 'lowliness of mind' is the high road to all grace and blessing (Jas. iv. 6 ; 1 Pet. v. 5) ; the lack of it is the cause of all failure in the Christian life.

**Each counting other better than himself]** Literally, 'each esteeming others as superiors to himself'. The word 'superiors' is used of rulers placed over us, in Rom. xiii. 1 ; 1 Pet. ii. 13.

his own things, but each of you also to the things of others.  
 5 Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus : who,

Not as in the unreal conventionalities of life by which a man calls himself 'your slave' or 'this least one'; nor yet as ignoring the excellencies which God has conferred on us; but, as regards claim to consideration, let each desire that his brother's claim come first.

We have inculcated here one of the most important principles of Christianity, and one which is commonly disregarded. Cf. Rom. xii. 10. If missionaries, Indian clergy, catechists and others acted invariably on this precept towards those committed to their charge, and the laity observed it in their bearing towards one another and towards their spiritual teachers, our Indian Church would soon be a power in the land. The principle enunciated in this verse strikes at the very root of both racial and caste prejudices:

**4. Not looking each of you to his own things]** 'Each' is in the plural here, and probably refers to the cliques or parties which existed in the Philippian Church. 'Not looking, each party of you, to their own things'.

**Looking]** that is 'regarding as your aim', the verb being derived from a word denoting 'aim', 'mark'. The Philippian cliques were aiming at their own interests and advancement, to the detriment of others.

Are there not congregations in India to-day where spiritual life is low (not to say *nil*) because men of certain parties (some of which have a caste basis at the bottom) only consult their own interests and the aggrandizement of their clique, and almost resent the intrusion of converts from other classes?

The same word of exhortation applies to Missions and Missionary Societies. How much harm is done in the Mission Field by 'aiming at our own interests', to the detriment of others.

**But each of you also to the things of others]** Here, again, 'each' is in the plural. 'Let each Church, Mission, Society, race, class of you (as well as each individual) regard as your aim the interests of others.' Unselfishness in the rule of Christ.

#### 5-11. EXAMPLE OF CHRIST'S HUMILITY

This is a passage which we shall do well to read on our knees whenever tempted to pride or self-assertiveness. All arguments, however specious, used to justify caste-distinctions or to support worldly views of social selfishness are seen to be flimsy cobwebs in the clear light of this Supreme Example. The verses are of untold importance, also, as teaching the complete Divinity of Christ.

<sup>2</sup>Gr. *being originally*.

<sup>3</sup>Gr. *a thing to be grasped*.

<sup>2</sup> being in the form of God, counted it not 6  
<sup>3</sup> a prize to be on an equality with God, but 7

**5. Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus]** The construction is irregular, though the meaning is clear.

The Greek reads literally 'Mind (or think) this in you which (was) also in Christ Jesus'. He has told them in v. 2 to 'mind the same thing', and, again, to continue 'minding the one thing', and here he defines that 'one thing' as that spirit of complete self-abnegation 'which was in Christ Jesus'.

There is no verb 'was' in the Greek and we have no right to limit the thought to the past. It both 'was' and still 'is' in Christ Jesus.

**In you]** i.e., 'in your inward being'. This is no mere exhortation to imitate a great Example. It points to the reproduction in the believer of the very mind and life of Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, by the indwelling in our hearts of the Lord Himself (Eph. iii 17-19). If Christ is there, His 'mind' will be there too. Christianity is not merely a system of ethics founded on the peerless example of a great and holy Teacher; it is a religion of salvation, bringing sinful men into a state of reconciliation with God through the Sacrifice of Calvary and providing them with a power, the power of the Holy Ghost, derived from their vital union with Christ, whereby they may overcome sin and walk in the footsteps of their holy Lord.

**6. Being]** The verb in the original implies that 'He already was' in the form of God prior to the event here spoken of. So far, it is a hint of, though it does not by itself absolutely assert, His Eternity, and, so far, of His Divinity also. See R. V. margin.

**In the form of God]** The word rendered 'form' (*μορφή*) is to be carefully contradistinguished from 'fashion' (*σχῆμα*), v. 8. It 'implies not the external accidents, but the essential attributes' (Lightfoot). Moule well defines it as 'reality in manifestation'. In other words it signifies 'form' as the true utterance and expression of the inner life and essence. Though the word does not directly assert, standing by itself, that Christ has the Divine nature and essence, yet it clearly implies it, for He could not have the 'form' which is the veritable expression and manifestation of that Essence without having the inner Essence itself. The possession of the one involves participation in the other.

Thus we learn from this verse that Christ had, in an existence prior to His Incarnation, all the essential attributes of God:—in short, that He was God.

emptied himself, taking the form of a <sup>4</sup> servant, 4 Gr. *bondservant*.  
 8 <sup>5</sup> being made in the likeness of men ; and being 5 Gr. *becoming in*.

**Counted it not a prize]** The word translated 'prize' is found nowhere else in the New Testament, and only once in the Greek classics. Two renderings have been advocated.

(a) 'A prize, a treasure' (literally.—'A piece of plunder'). This is accepted in the text, and the idea suggested is that Christ did not treat His equality with God as a prize to be grasped tightly and held firmly at all costs, but, in an act of supreme self-abnegation, resigned the glories of heaven in order to save sinful men. Stress is thus laid on His willing surrender of His prerogatives.

(b) 'Robbery, usurpation.' This would give the meaning that our Lord could claim equality with God as His inherent and inalienable right, and so would lay stress on His majesty rather than on His humility.

The former rendering is decidedly to be preferred, having regard to the context. The 'prize' was so fully His own that He could deal with it as He pleased, for our sakes. 'He did not cling with avidity to the prerogatives of His Divine majesty' (Lightfoot).

**To be on an equality with God]** The original shews clearly that the reference is to an equality of attributes, rather than to a comparison of Persons. There is no suggestion here of dividing the Godhead. 'The glorious Person in view is not another and independent God, of rival power and glory, but the Christ of God as truly and fully Divine as the Father' (Moule).

We must remember that St. Paul, the writer, had been reared in the strictest school of Jewish Monotheism, and that, therefore, he would not lightly use language so undoubtedly expressive of our Lord's Divinity unless he believed Him to be 'very God of very God'.

**7. But emptied Himself]** That is, of the glories of Deity, not of His Divine Nature (for that were impossible). Moule says 'of the manifestation and exercise of Deity, as it was His on the throne'. We must beware of accepting any such expositions of this act of the Son of God as would represent Him as condescending to become fallible and merely human. The Atonement would be neither just nor efficacious unless He Who hung upon the Cross were verily and truly God, right up to that supreme moment of the Passion, and eternally beyond it.

Bengel says, conscious of the paradox involved in the words, 'He remained full (John i. 14), and yet He bore Himself henceforward as

found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming though He were empty'. Surely it means that, while remaining 'God of God and Light of Light', He divested Himself, in the Incarnation, of the prerogatives of His Divine majesty for the special Mission then before Him, and accepted, in order to the fulfilment of His purpose, the conditions of a human life lived on earth in entire dependence on the Holy Spirit. Great is this 'mystery of godliness' (1 Tim. iii. 16).

There is emphasis, in the Greek, on the word 'Himself', drawing attention to the fact that His action was of an entirely voluntary nature.

Is it not just in this aspect that we are called to follow in His steps, by emptying ourselves of any special prerogatives which we may seem to possess, whether of birth, wealth, or education, for the sake of others? Let all be surrendered to God, in His glad bondservice. Above all, we need emptying of self in all the various and subtle forms in which it appears.

**Taking the form of a servant]** The sense of the original is best conveyed by translating 'emptied Himself *by* taking the form of a servant'. The two actions coincide in time, as is shown by the tenses of the verbs. In fact, His great emptying of Himself consisted in His taking the form of a 'bondservant', and, as such, living and working in dependence on the Holy Spirit's power.

The word 'form' is the same as the one used in v. 6, and, as there, lays stress on the essential attributes, not on the mere external appearance. He became in reality a 'bond-Servant', and did not merely play the role of a 'servant', i.e., 'bondslave'. See i. l. The bondservice in question is, pre-eminently, bondservice rendered to God (cf. Ps. xl. 6-8; Heb. x. 5-7). He shewed, as Man, what real bondservice to God means. It is true, of course, that He condescended to be the servant of men too (Matt. xx. 27, 28; Mark x. 44, 45; John xiii. 1-20), but the main truth intended here is, beyond doubt, His perfect service of the Father.

A real God, with 'the form of God'! A real bondslave, with 'the form of a bondslave'! what a gigantic step from that to this!

**Being made in the likeness of men]** Literally, 'becoming (what He was not before) in the likeness of men'. This again synchronizes in time with the emptying and the taking the form of a bondslave, as the tense of the verb shews. The expression 'in the similitude of men' suggests that, while He was like man in all that constitutes true humanity, He was yet more than man, or the phrase 'in the likeness of men' would be redundant. Cf. Heb. ii. 14-18. 'Men', not 'man', for He came as Representative and Champion of the whole human race.

**8. And being found in fashion as a man]** 'Being found', i.e., as one who appeared to view, inviting attention and inspection. The word emphasizes what He appeared to be to the eyes of men.

g obedient *even* unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name

**Fashion]** ( $\sigma\chi\eta\mu\alpha$ ), a word denoting the external semblance only. It is found again, in the New Testament, only in 1 Cor. vii. 31. As contrasted with the word 'form', it represents the figure, shape, or fashion of a thing, usually with a distinct idea of its transiency. In this verse, it does not deny the reality of our Lord's Manhood, which is abundantly substantiated by the context, but lays stress on His outward appearance or guise. Like the word 'likeness' in v. 7, it hints that, while He wore a human 'shape', He was more than man. This 'fashion', as Moule says, was 'the veil of Deity'.

**He humbled Himself]** From Deity to humanity! And now from humanity to infamy! Tremendous steps! The Greek verb, being in the Aorist tense, seems to refer to some special crisis of will (Gethsemane?); or perhaps it sums up into one all the acts of self-humiliation of His life of perfect obedience to the Father's will. Of these, Gethsemane and Calvary form the climax.

**Becoming obedient (even) unto death]** The Greek verb implies that 'He humbled Himself *by* or *in* becoming obedient, etc.'. The actions were simultaneous. Some take this as referring to His obedience rendered 'to the laws of human society, to His parents, and to the civil magistrates, carrying that obedience even to the point of submitting unto death'.

But, surely, the real reference is to His obedience to the Father's will cf. (Luke xxii. 42-44; Heb. v. 7, 8). This was His main business in His life as a Bondservant, to obey that will which He had voluntarily accepted as His rule of life. 'Unto death', meaning 'to the length of death', 'to the extent of dying'. The phrase is found again in ii. 30.

**Yea! the death of the cross]** The most shameful as well as the most painful of deaths. It was a mode of dying accursed in Jewish eyes (Deut. xxi. 23), and unspeakably degrading from the Roman point of view. 'Far be the very name of a cross not only from the bodies of Roman citizens, but from their imagination, eyes, and ears' (Cicero). As he wrote the words, St. Paul, a Roman citizen himself and, as such, removed from the possibility of such a degradation, must have felt, as we cannot, the fearful depth of his Lord's humiliation. The Lord of glory dying the ignominious death of slaves and malefactors! How can a Christian's pride live before such a spectacle?

Contrast with this matchless Self-abnegation the so-called incarnations of Hindu deities, e.g., the story told in the Rāmâyana. Is not the revelation of this passage as far superior to all such stories as the heaven is high above the earth?

**9. Wherefore]** 'Because of His self-humiliation, as a due reward and recognition of His full obedience and perfect service as the Bondsman'.

which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every **10** knee should bow, of *things* in heaven and *things* on earth, and

It is true for all that the way to honour is humility (Luke xiv. 11; xviii. 14). To rise, stoop; this is the spiritual law.

**God highly exalted Him]** That is, in the Resurrection and Ascension. This is the only occurrence of the word 'highly exalted' in the New Testament; this hyper-exaltation is for Christ and for Him alone. He stooped very low; let Him be exalted very high! The 'steps up' must be as gigantic as the 'steps down'!

Conybeare and Howson render 'exalted Him above measure'. Bengel says 'Christ emptied Christ; God exalted Christ'.

**Gave unto Him]** The same word which occurred in i. 29, denoting a free and loving boon. This appears to be the only passage in the New Testament in which the word is used of a gift to Christ. Bengel remarks 'Thus the emptying was fully compensated', and he goes on to call attention to the plenitude which the gift implied, as expressed in Eph. i. 20-23.

**The name which is above every name]** 'The name' stands for dignity, office, glory. In the Old Testament the name of God is used to denote His revealed character and majesty, and is an object of praise and adoration. If any definite name is in view here, therefore, it is not the personal name Jesus, as many commentators have supposed, but the supreme name by which God has revealed Himself in His majesty, THE LORD JEHOVAH. It is given to Christ now in a new way, as the victorious Redeemer. Cf. Rev. xix. 16. He Who hung upon the cross is now seen invested with glory as the great 'I AM'.

But the main idea of the verse is His honour and dignity. His is the supreme name, the supreme majesty, the supreme dominion (see Eph. i. 21).

**10. In the name of Jesus]** 'It is not "the name Jesus," but "the name of (that is, belonging to) Jesus"', (Lightfoot)

The meaning of the word 'name' must be the same as in the preceding verse, i.e., it denotes 'dignity, manifested glory', so that the thought presented here is that of 'the majesty of Jesus'. Passages like Ps. xliv. 8; lxiii. 4; cv. 3; 1 Kgs. viii. 44 (rendered 'unto the Lord'); xviii. 24; etc., in which this same phrase is employed in the LXX translation, shew clearly that it is adoration addressed to the Lord Jesus, and not worship paid through Him, which is here intended. 'To the name and majesty of Jesus all created things shall pay homage on bended knee' (Lightfoot's paraphrase).

- 11 <sup>6</sup> *things* under the earth, and that every tongue should confess  
 6 Or things of that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the  
*the world below.* Father.

**Every knee should bow]** A quotation from Is. xlv. 23 (LXX), cited again in Rom. xiv. 11. Isaiah's context refers it distinctly to the Lord Jehovah, in a connexion which speaks of Him as the God of righteousness and salvation, and is clearly suggestive of the redemption wrought by Christ. Such an application of such a passage is undoubted evidence of St. Paul's belief in the full Divinity of the Lord Jesus.

'It is strange', say Conybeare and Howson, 'that this verse should often have been quoted as commanding the practice of bowing the head at the name of Jesus; what it really prescribes is kneeling in adoration of Him'.

**Of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth]** Some take these three adjectives (in heaven, on earth, under the earth) as neuter. So they are rendered in the text. Bishop Lightfoot strongly advocates this and understands the sense to be 'all creation, all things whatsoever and wheresoever they be'; in other words, the whole universe. He quotes Rev. v. 13 in support of this view, and Rom. viii. 22. Others prefer to regard the adjectives as masculine (or common), and understand 'all who dwell in heaven, in earth, or under the earth'. This view has led to various attempts at classification, such as 'angels, living men, and buried men'; or 'angels, men, and lost spirits', etc.

On the whole, the former view seems preferable, though both may be included.

The adjective rendered 'in heaven' is frequent in the New Testament.

The one rendered 'on earth' is found again in John iii. 12; 1. Cor. xv. 40; 2. Cor. v. 1; Jas. iii. 15; and in ch. iii. 19.

That rendered 'under the earth' occurs only in this verse. Those acquainted with the classics of India will note with interest the correspondence of these words with the Hindu division of the universe into three regions (Tri-loka), 'heaven, earth, and the lower region' (Antara-lôka, Bhû-loka, Pâtâla-loka).

**11. Every tongue should confess]** A continuation of the quotation from Is. xlv. 23.

The verb, in its general usage, means 'to declare or confess openly', and we may consider this sense as not excluded here. But it has also a secondary meaning 'to offer praise or thanksgiving', and the word is used generally in the LXX with this signification, while the passage from which it is here cited in Isaiah also requires this meaning. Christ Himself so uses it in Matt. xi. 25; Luke x. 21; (thank, or praise). We may



So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not <sup>7</sup> as in my presence only, but now <sup>7</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *as*. 12

understand, therefore, the force of the verse to be 'Every tongue shall declare in praise and thanksgiving'. It is 'the confession of adoring, praising worship'. We do well, in lands like India, where true Christians are obviously in a very small minority, to rest our faith on such promises as these, 'Every knee', 'Every tongue.'

**That Jesus Christ is Lord]** He who became a 'bondslave' is now seen to be Lord of all. Cf. Acts ii. 36; Rom. x. 9; 1 Cor. xii. 3. The Lordship of Jesus Christ is prominent in the New Testament and a sincere acceptance of it involves entire submission to His will (Rom. vi. 16; Col. ii. 6; 1 Pet. iii. 15). We must give Him the same supreme place in our hearts and lives which the Father has given Him in the Church and on the Throne. All these 'high doctrines' of Scripture are to be made true, by faith, in our experience. There can be little doubt that, in such passages as this, the word 'Lord' is the New Testament equivalent for the Hebrew 'Jehovah' and carries with it all the supremacy of Deity which that sacred name connotes.

**To the glory of God the Father]** This is always set forth in the New Testament as the ultimate end of our redemption and sanctification, as well as of our worship and service. It is well in view in this Epistle (i. 11; iv. 20). The whole mediatorial dispensation of God the Son has as its climax and goal 'the glory of God the Father' (1 Cor. xv. 24).

It would be difficult to conceive a grander passage than this which, while it aims at setting forth the supreme example of Christ's unselfishness, incidentally and with perfect simplicity presents us with collateral proofs of our Lord's perfect Divinity and true Humanity, as well as elucidating His sacred relationship to the Father. It is, though written with quite a different object, a sort of Nicene Creed in miniature, declaring Christ's Divine Nature, His Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, and glorious Session on the Throne.

And, be it remembered, all this blaze of light and glory is laid bare before us in order to make us humble, loving and obedient.

#### 12-16. EXHORTATION TO OBEDIENCE AND HOLINESS

**12. So then]** That is, 'with Christ's humility and subsequent exaltation before your eyes'. This conjunction (*ὥστε*, so then, wherefore) expresses the effect which an argument ought to have on those who hear it. Study the force of it in the passages annexed:—Rom. vii. 4; 1 Cor. iii. 7, 21; iv. 5; v. 8; x. 12; xv. 58; 2 Cor. v. 16, 17; Gal. iii. 9, 24; iv. 7; 1 Phil. iv. 1; 1 Thes. iv. 8; 1 Pet. iv. 19.

much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with

In this Epistle, by means of this conjunction, St. Paul seeks to bring the glorious doctrines of the Self-sacrifice (ii. 5-11), and the Second Coming (iii. 20, 21; iv. 1) of Christ to bear upon the life and conduct of his Christian converts. It is well, in reading our Bibles and coming face to face with any doctrine or privilege, to ask 'what impress ought this to make on my character and life'? We want more of this logical Christianity of practical holiness.

**My beloved]** A term of affection with which St. Paul often introduces his practical appeals. So also in iv. 1. Cf. 1 Cor. x. 14; xv. 58; 2 Cor. vii. 1; xii. 19; Philem. 1. The same loving method will be found in the writings of the other Apostles. The teacher who has to reprove and exhort needs a heart full of love so that every faithful word may be charged with tenderness (see 1 Cor. iv. 14).

**As ye have always obeyed]** The word 'obeyed' certainly glances back at Christ's matchless obedience (v. 8). 'He obeyed, even to the death; so then it is your bounden duty to obey, following in His steps'.

Literally 'As ye did always obey' (Aorist tense). Some understand it of obedience to God; others of obedience to the Apostle; others of obedience to both. If obedience to St. Paul be intended, then the tense may refer to the time of his presence with them in Philippi; or it may gather into one a whole series of acts of obedience.

We can hardly exclude altogether from this verse the duty of obedience, within right limits, to 'our teachers, spiritual pastors, etc.'. See Heb. xiii. 17.

**Not as in my presence, etc.]** The Greek construction requires these words to be connected with the verb which follows, 'work out', and not with the one preceding, 'obeyed.' The Apostle says 'Do not work out your salvation as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence'. Their energetic living of the Christian life was not to depend on the accident of the stimulus of his presence with them.

We are bidden to follow holiness because it is God's will for us (1 Thes. iv. 3), and not to depend on ministers and friends, even the saintliest, to incite us to it.

**Much more in my absence]** Because that absence ought to throw them more directly and fully on God's own help and resources. Enoch 'walked with God' at least 300 years without spiritual aid from man (Gen. v. 22-4), and that in the early twilight age of revelation. Daniel lived a holy life for seventy years amidst the sinful surroundings of a heathen court (Dan. i. 1, 21), and that long before the dispensation of the Holy Ghost.

fear and trembling ; for it is God which worketh in you both 13

This verse suggests the need of constant, secret, communion with God, if our faith is to be robust and our life holy. Public ordinances, however helpful, and fellowship with other Christians, however sweet, can never take the place of private devotions. Is not the neglect of private prayer and careful study of God's word one of the chief causes of failure in the lives of many Christians?

This needs the more attention since the life in many Indian homes is largely public, and it is difficult to find a quiet corner. Only resolute determination to be alone with God will ensure the constant observance of this secret 'fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ'. Many are the blessings in store for those who seek Him in the solitary place (Gen. xviii. 22, 23 ; xxxii. 24-29 ; Ex. xxxiv. 28-35 ; Josh. v. 13-15 ; Dan. x. 2-21 ; Rev. i. 9-20 ; Matt. vi. 6 ; etc.).

**Work out]** For some interesting uses of this verb, see Rom. v. 3, 'Tribulation worketh out patience' ; 2 Cor. iv. 17, 'Our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh out for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory' ; Jas. i. 3, 'The proof (or testing) of your faith worketh out patience'.

These illustrations will shew that the force of the verb is 'develop' 'accomplish', 'evolve'.

No contradiction lies here of the great doctrine of Justification by faith. Salvation is by grace (Eph. ii. 8) from first to last ; and even in this context the greatest stress is laid on the fact that God is the real and effectual Worker in our sanctification and glorification (v. 13). But man has his side of the work to attend to, in a life of loving obedience and watchfulness and response to the 'godly motions' of the Holy Spirit. He must 'abide' in Christ (John xv. 4), and this means the active exercise of faith, earnest continuance in prayer, and the diligent use of the means of grace. He must walk worthy of his vocation (Eph. iv. 1-2). Scripture is just as clear in its teaching about man's responsibility as it is in its full declarations about the sovereignty of God's grace.

**Your own salvation]** There is emphasis in the original on the word 'Your own', in consonance with the former part of the verse. The sense is, 'Do not depend on me ; attend to your own souls, in a faith and love which go out straight to God and depend on Him alone'.

**Salvation]** Clearly referring to final salvation and glory, as in i. 19, 28, but including present and continual sanctification, since the one is inseparable from the other. It is an appeal to men already justified to pay diligent attention to the progress of their sanctification, which is to be consummated shortly in 'the glory which shall be revealed'.

**14** to will and to work, for his good pleasure. Do all things

**With fear and trembling]** This phrase occurs again in 2 Cor. vii. 15; Eph. vi. 5. (Cf. 1. Cor. ii. 3).

**Fear]** i.e., of marring His work or opposing His loving will. It implies no doubt as to our acceptance in God's sight, and has in it nothing of the torture of misgiving (see 1 John iv. 18). As Archbishop Leighton said, 'the righteous dare to do anything but offend God'.

**Trembling]** i.e., 'a trembling and eager anxiety to do what is right'.

**13. For]** Here we have the reason for the 'fear and trembling'. He who works in us is God, the Holy One, and we do well to be careful in His presence lest, by any unbelief or disobedience, we hinder His work or offend His love.

Here, too, is strong encouragement for 'working out' our own salvation, and the real reason of success, 'Work, for God works with you; nay! He, the Almighty One, does all the real work'.

**It is God which worketh in you]** Better, 'For God it is Who is working effectively in you'. 'Worketh'. The word means 'works mightily, effectively'. Notice the tense, 'He works moment by moment', in the heart which trusts Him. Cf. Col. i. 29; 1 Thes. ii. 13.

**In you]** i.e., 'in your hearts'. The indwelling of God in the hearts of believers is a fundamental doctrine of the Gospel (see John xiv. 17; Eph. iii. 17-20; Col. i. 27, etc.). It is not an 'influence' which works in the Christian, or a spiritual 'force'; it is God Himself.

This indwelling of God, a Personal God, however, must be carefully distinguished from the Pantheistic doctrine of the Hindus, which, though it uses language sometimes appearing to resemble that of the Gospel, has really nothing in common with it, since it is founded either on materialistic conceptions of the 'all-pervasiveness' of an impersonal Deity or regards the human spirit as a kind of 'virtual image', not really existing, of the divine Spirit. Only the Gospel of Christ really teaches the possibility of having in our hearts, by faith, a personal, loving, sanctifying, enabling God.

**Both to will and to work]** Perhaps more accurately, 'both the willing and the working', i.e., your willing and your working.

'It is God working in you from first to last; God that inspires the earliest impulse, and God that directs the final achievement' (Lightfoot).

'We therefore will, but it is God that works in us that we so will; we therefore work, but it is God that works in us that we so work' (St. Augustine).

without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blame- 15  
less and harmless, children of God without blemish in the

Every good will and every good deed are the result of His work in the heart. Apart from Him, there is neither the one nor the other (John xv. 5.)

And every virtue we possess,  
And every victory won,  
And every thought of holiness,  
Are His alone.

**Work]** This is the same word as the one used in the previous clause, to work effectively'.

Thus, while human responsibility is duly emphasized in v. 12, the omnipotence of Divine grace is magnified in v. 13. Our 'working' must be on the lines of, and in entire dependence upon, His 'working'. As we obey His will, we shall experience His enabling power (Mark iii. 5; John v. 8, 9; etc.).

There is no room here for a doctrine of fatalism, leading to a life of idleness. It is as we go forward, in glad obedience, that we receive more and more fully God's enabling power. (Cf. Ex. xiv. 15, 24-31.)

**For His good pleasure]** 'In fulfilment of His benevolent purpose'. So Lightfoot, who connects the words with 'It is God which worketh in you' (so as to fulfil His purpose). God's object in thus working through the Christian is that His loving will may be accomplished in the world, by the salvation of sinners (1 Tim. ii. 4), and the sanctification of His people (1 Thes. iv. 3).

For 'good pleasure' see i. 15 note.

We see here that God's gracious purposes towards the millions of India can only be accomplished in proportion as the Christians of India yield themselves to His sanctifying power and constraining love. It is a solemn fact that every unholy Christian in this land is hindering, in his measure, the manifestation of God's power.

Conybeare and Howson take the phrase, however, in connexion with the following verse, placing a full stop after the words 'to work'. They read v. 14, 'Do all things for the sake of goodwill, without murmuring, etc'. This, though allowable grammatically, seems less natural and forcible than the rendering of the text.

In verse fourteen, the Apostle enters into the practical details of that life which is to be the result of God's indwelling and effectual working, with special reference to the circumstances of those to whom he is writing.

**14. Do all things without murmurings and disputings]** There is emphasis by position on the 'all things.' Cf. iii. 8; iv. 13. No exception is allowed to this rule; no circumstances whatever are allowed to

midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom

furnish an excuse for breaking it. It applies alike to our private life, our business, our social and ecclesiastical affairs.

Does not the verse suggest that such 'murmurings and disputings' are common and terrible hindrances to God's 'effective working'?

**Murmurings]** A word used frequently in the LXX of Israel's murmurings in the wilderness. History repeats itself, and the same sin reappears in the Church of the New Testament. The word occurs again in John vii. 12; Acts vi. 1; 1 Pet. iv. 9; while the cognate verb is found in Matt. xx. 11; Luke v. 30; John vi. 41, 43, 61; vii. 32; 1 Cor. x. 10.

It stands for 'thoughts and utterances of discontent' (Moule). An unthankful, discontented, unloving spirit is sure to hinder and mar God's work, and always indicates a lack of true humility. A heart at peace with God and man will not fret or murmur. It is the quiet sea which reflects the glories of the sky.

**Disputings]** This word is translated 'thoughts' in Matt. xv. 19; Mark vii. 21; Luke ii. 35; vi. 8; Jas. ii. 4; 'reasonings' in Luke v. 22; ix. 46, 47; xxiv. 38; Rom. i. 21; 1 Cor. iii. 20; and 'disputations' in Rom. xiv. 1; 1 Tim. ii. 8.

It may either mean 'inward reasonings or questionings', a rendering suggesting doubt or unbelief, and, by some, preferred here; or 'disputes', with the idea of contending, perhaps, for their own rights.

Bengel understands the 'murmurings' to be in respect of others, arising from jealousy of them, and the 'disputings' to be in respect of themselves, arising from self-assertion. Lightfoot understands the 'murmurings' of moral, and the 'inward reasonings' of intellectual, rebellion against God.

**15. Be]** Literally, 'Become'. There is a hint that they were not fully so when he wrote to them.

**Blameless]** The word is found again in Luke i. 6; Phil. iii. 6; 1 Thes. iii. 13; Heb. viii. 7, all interesting passages. It implies that there is nothing in the character or walk inviting censure.

**Harmless]** This rendering seems to have arisen from a mistaken derivation of the word from a root meaning 'without horns' (to push or hurt). Its real meaning is 'unadulterated' (from a root meaning to mix) and it is frequently used in the Greek classics of metal without alloy; pure, unmixed wine, etc. It is found again in Matt. x. 16; Rom. xvi. 19 (pure, unmixed as regards evil).

Lightfoot's paraphrase is excellent, 'so that you keep your own consciences single and pure'.

ye are seen as <sup>8</sup> lights in the world, holding forth 16  
 8 Gr. *luminaries*. the word of life ; that I may have whereof to glory

While the former word 'blameless' marks freedom from the censure of others, this word 'pure, unmixed' denotes freedom from the alloy of sin in our own inner character.

**Children of God]** The word 'children' in the Greek lays stress on their nature and character, as having been born again in Christ Jesus, rather than on their status and privilege. The exact phrase is found again in John i. 12 : xi. 52 ; Rom. viii. 16, 17, 21 ; ix. 8 ; 1 John iii. 1, 2, 10 ; v. 2 ; and always with the sense of born children. Having the nature of God (2 Pet. i. 4) involves the obligation of likeness to God.

This word 'children', and the phrases which follow, are quoted from the LXX of Deut. xxxii. 5.

**Without blemish]** In later Greek, this is the technical word to indicate the absence of any fault or flaw in a sacrificial victim such as would prevent its being offered. Here it marks the absence of any such blemish in the Christian as would prevent his being Christ's true witness to the world. The word occurs again in Eph. i. 4 ; v. 27 ; Col. i. 22 ; Heb. ix. 14 ; 1 Pet. i. 19 ; Jude 24 ; Rev. xiv. 5.

**In the midst of]** Cf. Matt. x. 16 ; Luke x. 3 ; John xvii. 15. The words appeal with special force to us in India, with millions of non-Christians round about us.

**Crooked]** 'Curved', 'bent', and so 'unrighteous'. It is found again in Luke iii. 5 ; Acts ii. 40 ; 1 Pet. ii. 18.

It is a warning to us to be straight in the midst of crookedness. With so much untruthfulness of speech and unrighteousness of conduct on every side of us, we Christians of India need to be very 'straight'. By rectitude of conduct let us protest against bribery, corruption, false evidence, questionable litigation, and any and every deviation from strict truth and equity. Above all, let us see to it that our own hands are clean. How many crooked dealings sometimes lie concealed behind the words borrowing, lending, buying, selling, property, and so on.

**Perverse]** Or 'distorted', 'twisted'. The word is often used, classically, of distorted eyes, feet, and limbs. It may suggest to us that the ungodly world neither sees straight nor walks straight. It occurs again, as here, in the passive voice, in Matt. xvii. 17. Luke ix. 41 ; Acts xx. 30.

Let us beware of 'distorted' views of things, arising from selfishness or worldliness ; and of 'twisted' conduct, due to love of money or conformity with carnal customs.

**Ye are seen]** Or, 'Ye appear'. The word is often used of the rising of the stars and heavenly bodies. Christians are to be God's stars, rising on the dark firmament of sin and heathenism, and shining there for Him.

in the day of Christ, that I did not run in vain  
 17 neither labour in vain. Yea, and if I am <sup>9</sup> offered 9 Gr. poured out as a drink-offering.

**As lights]** The word means 'light-bearers' or 'luminaries'. It is used almost invariably of the heavenly bodies. In the New Testament, it occurs again only in Rev. xxi. 11.

**In the world]** Just as the moon and stars rise as luminaries in the dark sky, so believers are to shine as spiritual luminaries in another firmament, viz., 'the world' which God loves (John iii. 16) and which Christ came to save (John iii. 17).

We need bright luminaries through the length and breadth of India!

**16. Holding forth]** Here the metaphor changes. This word (only one word in the Greek) is used in the classics of offering or presenting food and drink to others. We are to hold out the Bread of Life and the Water of Life for the acceptance of the hungry, thirsty souls around us, pressing it upon them with loving earnestness.

It may, grammatically, be linked on directly with 'that ye may be blameless and harmless' (holding forth, etc.).

**The word of life]** The Gospel, as God's message of eternal life in Christ. Cf. 1 John i. 1. It is the 'word' which reveals that 'life', and also imparts and sustains it, through the power of the Holy Ghost. See also, note on i. 14.

**That I may have whereof to glory]** Literally, 'to be a glorying to me'. The word 'glorying' is the same as in i. 26. Moule translates 'To afford me, even me, exultation'. The idea is explained in 1 Thes. ii. 19. When Christ comes, and we see those whom we have helped to win for Him glorified in His presence, joy and exultation will be our portion.

**In the day of Christ]** Literally, 'against the day of Christ'; i.e., in view of that day. See note on 1. 6.

**That I did not run in vain]** In anticipation he has gone ahead to the 'day of Christ', and, looking back from thence, uses the Aorist tense as though the course were already accomplished. For 'running' as a metaphor derived from athletic games, cf. 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25; Gal. ii. 2; v. 7; Heb. xii. 1; the glorified converts being the crown or prize at the end of the race; the 'running' denoting earnest, eager ministry.

**Labour]** This may refer to the training necessary for the athletic contests, so continuing the metaphor of the race. Otherwise, it will denote the steady, persevering toil of the Christian worker. It indicates real, hard work, 'toil unto the length of weariness'. (See, e.g., John iv. 6.)

Souls are not won without real toil and self-denial.



upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all: and in the same manner do ye also joy, and **18** rejoice with me.

If we want India to be evangelized, we must be up and doing. There is much danger in our midst of congregations settling down into a state of ease and indifference to the condition of the non-Christian world around them.

17-30. PERSONAL. EXPLANATION OF PLANS. MISSIONS OF TIMOTHY AND EPAPHRODITUS.

**17. Yea! and if, etc.]** The connexion with the preceding verse is 'Did I speak of running and toiling for you, as though that were some hard thing? Nay! but I am joyfully ready, if need be, to pour out my life for Christ's sake and for your spiritual welfare'.

**Am offered]** Literally, 'Am being poured out as a libation'. This may refer to the libations common among the Pagan Greeks. (cf. the soma-juice libations of Vedic times). But, more probably, it has reference to the drink-offerings of the Mosaic law. (See Ex. xxix. 39-41; Num. xv. 3-10, etc.).

It means, of course, that St. Paul was willing to pour out his life-blood as a free-will libation.

The word only occurs again in 2 Tim. iv. 6 where he is on the point of actually pouring out his life for Christ's sake.

The present tense here used makes the picture real and vivid. The Apostle, in his earnestness, sees himself, so to speak, in the very act of doing it. He is so ready for it that he regards it as already present!

**Upon the sacrifice and service of your faith]** The drink-offering was linked with the burnt-offering in the Mosaic economy (see Ex. xxix. 38-42). So, here, the Apostle's libation is to be poured out upon the whole burnt-offering of the believing and consecrated Philippian converts (Rom. xii. 1). In detail, the Philippians are the priests; their faith, with the entire consecration which it involves, is the sacrifice; and their beloved Teacher's life-blood is the drink-offering outpoured thereon.

Bishop Lightfoot calls attention to the fact that 'St. Paul's language expresses the fundamental idea of the Christian Church, in which an universal priesthood has supplanted the exclusive ministration of a select tribe or class'.

**Service]** This word *λειτουργία* originally meant the 'service of the State in a public office or function'. Then it came to denote a function or office of any kind, as, e.g., of the physical organs of the

**19** But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I

body. It was further used of the 'office of priestly or ministerial functions'; and, later, came to be employed in the technical ecclesiastical sense of a 'liturgy'.

It occurs elsewhere in the New Testament in Luke i. 23; 2 Cor. ix. 12; Phil. ii. 30; Heb. viii. 6; ix. 21; while the corresponding verb is found in Acts xiii. 2; Rom. xv. 27; Heb. x. 11. A careful study of these passages will shew that the sense of the word varies between a sacerdotal or ministerial one and one of a far more general nature, e.g., collecting money, and assisting by personal attention an imprisoned friend.

In this verse, it probably continues the idea of the sacrifice, and refers to the ritual functions or details of that sacrifice.

Conybeare and Howson have 'the ministration of the sacrifice of your faith'.

Possibly, we may understand the 'sacrifice' to denote faith's entire consecration to God, and the 'service' to indicate the life of earnest ministry and witness which ensues upon such a consecration.

**I joy and rejoice with you all]** It would be a crowning joy to him to lay down his life for his Master and for the beloved converts. And there would be a share for him, too, in that deep joy which would be, to them, the consequence of their fuller consecration to God, resulting from the 'sacrifice' thus crowned and consummated. Lightfoot prefers to render 'rejoice with' by 'congratulate'; thus, 'I rejoice and I congratulate you all therein'. But the other occurrences of the word in the New Testament favour the translation found in the text (Luke i. 58; xv. 6, 9; 1 Cor. xii. 26; xiii. 6).

**18. Do ye also joy and rejoice with me]** These verbs may be taken either as indicative or imperative. It seems best to adopt the latter.

It would be difficult for them to rejoice in prospect of their beloved Leader's death; yet he bids them rejoice if it means glory to God and increased unity and holiness among themselves. And he challenges them to share his own deep joy in the privilege of such self-sacrifice.

There are depths of experience in this verse which few have fathomed. Minister and people are seen here rejoicing together in view of the former's martyrdom!

We all need to know more of the joy of self-sacrifice. The work of evangelization would be greatly accelerated in India if all of us, missionaries and people, pastors and evangelists, understood better, in practice this passionate longing to 'pour out' self for the souls of others.

**19. But I hope]** 'Though absent from you myself at present (v. 12), I am not unmindful of your needs, and hope to send you speedy help'.

know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will 20

**In the Lord Jesus]** The phrase 'in the Lord' is almost peculiar to St. Paul. Cf. the following passages, by way of sample.

I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus. Rom. xiv. 14; I have confidence to you-ward in the Lord. Gal. v. 10; 2 Thes. iii. 4; This I say, and testify in the Lord. Eph. iv. 17; 'I trust in the Lord. Phil. ii. 24; I rejoice in the Lord. Phil. iv. 10. Thus the Apostle knew, was persuaded, spoke, testified, hoped, was confident, 'rejoiced', all 'in the Lord'.

'The Christian is a part of Christ, a member of His body. His every thought and word and deed proceeds from Christ, as the centre of volition. He has one guiding principle in acting and in forbearing to act, "ONLY IN THE LORD"' (Lightfoot). We are to receive friends (Rom. xvi. 2; Phil. ii. 29), to obey our lawful superiors (Eph. vi. 1), to find our spiritual strength (Eph. vi. 10), to have our joy (Phil. iii. 1; iv. 4), and to stand firm and steadfast (Phil. iv. 1; 1 Thes. iii. 8), all 'IN THE LORD'.

A still fuller study of the phrase in the New Testament is recommended, as it occurs in many other passages. How real and far-reaching our union with Christ should be! Nothing, in a Christian's lawful experience, is left outside the charmed circle of that mystic union (see note also on iv. 2).

**Timothy]** See note on i. 1. He was well known in Philippi, and would be warmly welcomed there.

**That I also may be of good comfort]** The sense is, 'that I also may take courage and be cheered, as well as that you may be stimulated and profited'.

The words to 'be of good comfort' does not occur again in the New Testament. Perhaps it contains a hint here that he was just a little troubled in mind about their divisions. When good tidings of their unity arrive by Timothy, it will be like a spiritual tonic to his soul and will promote his perfect happiness.

We notice, all through St. Paul's Epistles, how his joy and very life seemed to be bound up with the spiritual welfare of his converts (see e.g. 2 Cor. vii. 5-7; Gal. iv. 19; 1 Thes. iii. 6-8). A grand pattern, his, for Indian missionaries, ministers, pastors, and evangelists.

**20. I have no man likeminded]** That is 'likeminded with Timothy'. The word 'likeminded' occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. Moule renders it 'equal-souled', which is more literal. Amongst St. Paul's companions, then present in Rome, there was none other equal to Timothy in spiritual and evangelistic qualifications. He was the man for the work contemplated.

21 <sup>10</sup> Gr.  
genuinely.

care <sup>10</sup> truly for your state. For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ.

**Who will care]** Literally 'Such that he will take anxious thought'. The verb here used 'to be anxious', 'to take anxious thought', usually denotes a wrong and forbidden anxiety; e.g., about food and clothing (Matt. vi. 25, 27, 28, 31, 34), about work and business (Luke x. 41), about self-defence (Matt. x. 19; Luke xii. 11), about the things of the world (1 Cor. vii. 34). In ch. iv. 6, we are bidden, still in the same sense, 'In nothing to be anxious'. In the following verses, however, we are told that one kind of anxious thought, and one alone, is legitimate and praiseworthy:—

Anxious care 'for the things of the Lord' 1 Cor. vii. 32, 34; anxious care 'one of another' (Christians); 1 Cor. xii. 25, and here, anxious care 'for the Churches'; 2 Cor. xi. 28.

We see, therefore, that the only anxious care which the Christian may exercise is loving, earnest, careful thought for the glory of his Lord and the welfare of souls. All anxiety which centres in or round himself is wrong and sinful. The careful thought which has Christ's glory as its sole object is alone right and good.

Do we sufficiently care for the well-being of our congregations? for the glory of Christ in India? for the salvation of souls? Have we the care which will agonize in prayer, and which will make us earnest and aggressive in work?

**Truly]** This adverb is only found here, but the corresponding adjective occurs in 2 Cor. viii. 8; Phil. iv. 3; 1 Tim. i. 2; Tit. i. 4; in which passages the sense of 'true', 'sincere' prevails in our English version.

But the etymology of the word allows another meaning, and a more primary one, viz., 'naturally, instinctively' (by an instinct derived from race or birth). Lightfoot argues with reason for this meaning and paraphrases 'as an instinct derived from his spiritual parentage.' Timothy had been born anew in the Gospel and 'inherited all the interests and affections of his spiritual father'. Above all, he was now 'a partaker of the Divine nature', and, by reason of *that*, he loved the souls of his fellow-Christians, ay! and of all men (1 John iv. 7).

Only as we allow God's Spirit to work in our hearts shall we be able to care for the souls around us. We cannot force ourselves into this passionate passion for souls. It must be, in the sense of this verse, a natural outcome of the new, Divine nature within us.

**Your state]** Literally 'the things concerning you', i.e., 'your circumstances and affairs'.

**21. They all]** That is, all those, without exception, from whom he was able at that time to select his messenger, all those who ought

But ye know the proof of him, that, as a child *serveth* a father, **22** so he served with me in furtherance of the gospel. Him therefore I hope to send forthwith, so soon as I shall see how it **23**

to have been available for such emergencies. There is a tone of great sadness about the words, indicating disappointment in some of his companions. At a later date, the disappointment was even keener (2 Tim. iv. 10, 11, 16). We must not think, however, that his friends had ceased to be helpers and workers. From chapter i. 14 we see that work was being pushed on more vigorously than ever. But only single-hearted men can be entrusted with special missions; only whole-hearted soldiers can be sent to posts of danger. Self must be deposed if we are to be vessels 'meet for the Master's use'.

India's great need to-day is whole-hearted, unselfish Christians who will care for souls with a *care which costs something*. From all sides comes the cry, 'Wanted leaders, from among India's own sons, brave, zealous, wise, loving Timothies'.

**Seek their own]** That is 'their own things' (neuter); their own interests; their own ease and comfort; their own selfish aims. Selfishness is the curse of the Church.

**Not the things of Jesus Christ]** 'His interests in the purity of the Church and the evangelization of the world'. Contrast with this the Apostle's own desire and determination (i. 20). This should be our rule of life, 'Not I, but Christ; not mine, but His'.

**22. Ye know]** In the sense of 'recognize'. As they looked back, they could see clearly what sort of man Timothy was. It was the knowledge of experience. See i. 1.

**The proof of him]** This word literally means the 'test' or 'proof' of metals or money. It occurs in Rom. v. 4; 2 Cor. ii. 9; viii. 2; ix. 13, xiii. 3. It is interesting to note that it is chiefly found in 2 Cor. which is pre-eminently the Epistle of ministerial work and character. The exact shade of meaning here intended seems to be that of 'approved character', which is the result of the testing. Timothy had passed, like metal put to the proof, through hot fires of trial before he approved himself as having the high character and unique qualifications attributed to him in v. 20.

St. Paul, also, knew what the fire of testing meant (2 Cor. xi. 23.-28). Shame on our ease and selfishness! It takes a lot of fire, sometimes, to produce a good missionary or worker.

**As a child (serveth) a father]** Quite literally 'as child with father'. This is the same word for child as in v. 15. It is an exquisitely tender touch, breathing with affection. He was literally St. Paul's child in the

**24** will go with me ; but I trust in the Lord that I myself also  
**25** shall come shortly. But I counted it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow-worker and fellow-soldier, faith (1. Tim. i. 2). And Timothy's loving helpfulness and close companionship in the work are also here in view.

**He served with me]** Literally 'with me he did bondservice', i.e. (as the Aorist tense suggests) 'especially during my visit to Philippi'. St. Paul loves to sustain the thought of bondservice (i. 1). It is possible to translate 'with me he entered on bondservice', i.e., 'took up the bond-slave's life'. If so, the reference would lie naturally to his first undertaking this special service (Acts xvi. 1-3).

**In furtherance of the Gospel]** See note on chapter i. 5, when the same phrase occurs.

**23. So soon as I shall see]** That is 'immediately upon seeing how I fare as to my approaching trial'. The word here rendered 'see' only occurs again in Heb. xii. 2, 'looking (away) unto Jesus', and its primary meaning is to look away from all else to a special person or thing, and so to have in full view. Was he so busy with his Master's work that he had no leisure just then to look away from that even to the most important personal matters? At least, it involves getting a full, clear view of his own prospects before sending away his trusted helper. He would wish, too, to be able to send the Philippians definite news about himself.

He has already stated his convictions about the result of the trial (i. 25).

**How it will go with me]** Rather, and more simply, 'the things around me', i.e., 'my position and circumstances'. It need not, of necessity, be confined to his approaching trial.

**24. I trust]** The same verb as in chapter i. 25 (having confidence). 'I have confidence'; 'I feel sure'.

**In the Lord]** See note on v. 19. His plans of work were all begun, continued, and ended 'in the Lord'.

**Shortly]** A relative term. It means, probably, 'at no great interval after Timothy's arrival at Philippi'. He may have been delayed, however, much longer than he expected. A striking parallel is found in 1 Cor. iv. 17, 19.

**25. I counted it]** The verb is in the tense known as the epistolary Aorist, and would be best rendered 'count', in the present tense. It is practically certain that Epaphroditus was himself the bearer of the Epistle.

**Necessary]** Or 'obligatory' cf. 2 Cor. ix. 5, where the same expression occurs. The necessity lay perhaps in the fact that they were anxiously

and your <sup>11</sup> messenger and minister to my need ; since he longed <sup>12</sup> after you all, and was sore troubled, because ye had heard that he was sick : 11 Gr. *apostle*.  
12 Many ancient authorities read *to see you all*. 26

waiting to see Epaphroditus (vv. 26, 28) ; or it may have lain in the fact that St. Paul wished to compose the differences in the Philippian congregation as soon as possible. He would not leave the noxious weed of disunion to grow apace another day if he could help it.

**Epaphroditus]** Only known to us from this Epistle. His name (graceful, beautiful) derived from Aphrodite or Venus the goddess of beauty, was a common one in the Roman empire. Its abbreviated form is Epaphras, and this has led to his identification by some with the Colossian minister Epaphras (Col. i. 7 ; iv. 12 ; Philem. 23). But the two must be distinguished, as they are certainly different persons.

This is an instance of the retention by a Christian of his heathen name after Baptism.

We learn from iv. 18 that he had brought the Philippian contributions to St. Paul, and the verses which follow here shew him to have been a loving, zealous, self-denying man.

A new beauty was his after conversion, the beauty of the Lord Christ. Cf. Ps. xc. 17, the beauty of holiness.

**My brother and fellow-worker and fellow soldier]** 'The three words are arranged in an ascending scale, common sympathy, common work, common danger and toil and suffering' (Lightfoot). Or, otherwise expressed, he was first a brother in the Lord, by virtue of the New Birth ; then he had gone on to be a fellow-worker, by taking service in the Master's vineyard ; and he had followed on further still and become a fellow-soldier in the battles of the Lord.

All brethren are not workers, though they ought to be ; and not all workers are soldiers, ready to face the foe and take the post of danger.

Fellow-worker is found also in Rom. xvi. 3, 9, 21 ; 1 Cor. iii. 9 ; 2 Cor. i. 24 ; viii. 23 ; Phil. iv. 3 ; Col. iv. 11 ; 1 Thes. iii. 2 ; Philem. 1, 24 ; 3 John 8.

Fellow-soldier occurs again only in Philem. 2. It must indicate the fact that Epaphroditus had striven alongside St. Paul in some very special way, whether at Philippi in the past, or in Rome quite recently.

**Your messenger]** Literally 'apostle', meaning 'delegate or messenger of a Church'. Cf. 2 Cor. viii. 23. He had come as the bearer of their greetings and gifts. Some have interpreted the word as though Epaphroditus were the apostle of the Philippian Church in the sense

**27** for indeed he was sick nigh unto death : but God had mercy on him ; and not on him only, but on me also, that I might

of being their presiding bishop, but such an interpretation is absolutely without warrant. As Moule points out, the word is much the same as our missionary.

**Minister to my need]** The word translated 'minister' (*λειτουργός*) is derived from the same root as the one rendered 'service' in v. 17 (see note there). It has thus sacred and solemn associations, and Moule well renders it 'ministrant'. We see that the faithful administration of funds and discharge of financial responsibility ought to be regarded as a sacred trust, as sacred as ministry in God's House. Here is a lesson for us workers in India, where there is a tendency to regard Church monies in a loose and unlawful way, using them, on occasion, for private purposes and considering it right to do so as long as they are refunded afterwards. No such trust monies ought to be applied, under any circumstances whatever, to private ends ; nor ought they to be kept mixed up with personal funds. The word is found, elsewhere, in Rom. xiii. 6 ; xv. 16 ; Heb. i. 14 ; viii. 2.

**26. He longed after you all]** More accurately, 'he was (in a state of) longing for you all'. The word 'longed' is the same one as is used in i. 8, denoting homesick longing.

The strong yearning of those early Christians for each other, ministers for people, and people for ministers, is noteworthy.

The 'you all' seems to convey a hint that Epaphroditus, at least, had no party spirit.

**Was sore troubled]** This word only occurs here and in Matt. xxvi. 37 ; Mar. xiv. 33 ; where it is used of our Lord's 'sore trouble' in Gethsemane. Some derive it from a root meaning 'away from home', and explain it as signifying 'out of himself', 'beside himself', as though from sorrow and sadness.

A better suggestion, however, seems to be that which derives it from a root meaning 'to be sated', the idea then being that of shrinking, in very 'loathing', from the excess of pain and grief. It expresses the restlessness produced by great mental distress. This strong sense of 'loathing' admirably suits the usage of the word in the history of Christ's passion in Gethsemane.

Moule paraphrases, 'the distraction of over-wrought feeling.'

**He was sick]** The tense of the verb suggests the rendering 'he fell sick', marking the occasion of his being taken ill.



not have sorrow upon sorrow. I have sent him therefore the **28** more diligently, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice,

Some think that it may have been an attack of Roman fever which laid him suddenly low, for Roman fever is famous. Whatever the nature of the malady, overstrain was the cause (v. 30).

**27. For indeed he was sick]** The force of the passage is 'Yes! indeed he fell sick. But that word hardly expresses the seriousness of the case. It was more than ordinary sickness, for it was extremely dangerous and almost proved fatal'.

**High unto death]** Or, 'close alongside death'. It shews how dangerous the illness had been.

**God had mercy on him]** Not because death would mean sorrow and loss to so true a Christian (see i. 21, 23), but that he might have new opportunities for service and soul-winning before he 'went hence and was no more seen'. Possibly, at that solemn epoch, Epaphroditus had been distressed by the thought that he had done on earth so little for his Saviour.

St. Paul uses this word (to have mercy; passive, to obtain mercy) in a ministerial sense in 1 Cor. vii. 25; 2 Cor. iv. 1; 1 Tim. i. 13, 16.

**On me also]** This missionary's heart is bound up with his friends and converts. Their joys are his joys; their sorrow his sorrows.

**Sorrow upon sorrow]** If Epaphroditus had died, the Philippians would have lost a true friend, and the Apostle might have felt that he had been the unwilling cause of their sustaining so great a loss. St. Paul, too, would have been bereaved of a beloved 'brother, fellow-worker and fellow-soldier'. All this, coming on the top of the trials detailed in i. 15-17, would have been indeed 'sorrow heaped on sorrow'. (Cf. 2 Cor. vii. 5).

The Apostle's rest of faith (iv. 6, 7) was no mere stoicism; it left ample room for human joy and sorrow.

This verse throws some light on a subject which troubles many, the question of 'gifts of healing'. It is clear that even this specially endowed Apostle could not always claim healing by faith even for his dearest and holiest friends. (Cf. 2 Tim. iv. 20). He had to commit them to God's will and mercy.

**28. I have sent him]** The epistolary Aorist again, meaning, 'I am sending him (with this letter)'.

**The more diligently]** This adverb is found again in Luke vii. 4 (beseeching 'earnestly'), 2 Tim. i. 17; and Tit. iii. 13. The corresponding adjective occurs only in 2 Cor. viii. 17, 22.

**29** and that I may be the less sorrowful. Receive him therefore in the Lord with all joy ; and hold such in honour : because

Collating these texts, we see a series of channels for Christian earnestness.

(a) In entreating, Luke vii. 4 ; (b) in seeking, 2 Tim. i. 17 ; (c) in assisting, Tit. iii. 13 ; (d) in ministering, 2 Cor. viii. 17, 22 ; (e) in sending help (here).

Translate ' more earnestly, eagerly, therefore, am I sending him '.

**Again]** This word may be connected either thus with the verb ' see ' (when you see him again), in which case it refers to their reunion with Epaphroditus ; or it may, so far as the grammar is concerned, be connected with ' rejoice ', (that seeing him you may be glad again), in which case it denotes the full recovery of that cheerfulness which had been clouded by the tidings of Epaphroditus' illness.

**And I may be the less sorrowful]** Let us learn from St. Paul to practise what we preach. He has been inculcating the duty of unselfishness, after the example of Christ's self-abnegation (vv. 3-11). Here he himself displays real unselfishness. His own sorrow will be lessened, he says, when his friend is safe back at Philippi, away from the risks of Rome, and when the Church there is gladdened and strengthened by Epaphroditus' presence. But there is not a word about his own personal loss, when his friend leaves him. If they are glad, Paul will be satisfied, though it means real bereavement to himself. In that Roman prison, amidst the trying circumstances which he has described in ch. i, he might well have been excused, if he had shewn reluctance in losing Epaphroditus' willing help. But no ! he forgets his own loss in the gain it will bring to others. Verily ! he is not ' looking to his own things ', but to ' the things of others ' (v. 4).

**29. Receive him in the Lord]** The same expression occurs in Rom. xvi. 2. Would that all our meetings and greetings were ' in the Lord ', canopied by His presence and grace. Cf. v. 19, note.

It is possible that the friction in the Philippian congregation had made some look on Epaphroditus with a certain amount of disfavour, and that St. Paul on that account, thought it necessary thus to exhort them.

**With all joy]** ' Let there be no cloud of friction or sorrow when he comes '. How clearly the note of Christian joy keeps ringing out in this Epistle ! (Introd. VI).

The phrase ' all joy ' occurs again in Jas. i. 2.

**Hold such in honour]** Or, ' hold such in high value '. The word

<sup>13</sup> Many ancient authorities read *the Lord*.

for the work of <sup>13</sup> Christ he came nigh unto <sup>30</sup> death, hazarding his life to supply that which was lacking in your service toward me.

translated 'in honour' is found in very few passages. A list of them is subjoined.

- (a) Of a servant highly valued by his master. Luke vii. 2 (dear).
- (b) Of a guest               ,,               ,, by his host. Luke xiv. 8.
- (c) Of the Chief Stone highly valued by God and the saints. 1 Pet. ii. 4, 6.
- (d) Of a minister highly valued by his people. (here).

This soldier had been to the front and had been wounded in the fight. Let him be honoured with many honours as he now returns home covered with glory.

**30. For the work of Christ]** Some ancient authorities read 'of the Lord', which would give, practically, the sense of 'the Master's work'. Lightfoot follows still another old MS. in reading 'the work' only, (because for the work he came nigh, etc.). Cf. Acts xv. 38. But the reading 'Christ' is well supported, and it is but another recurrence of one of the main words of the Epistle (Introd. VI).

We have here a clear refutation of the doctrine, largely prevalent in these days, that sickness in the true Christian must be due to some special sin to which he has given place. Here, at least, is a man who was sick 'nigh unto death', not for any offence which he had committed, or for any unbelief which he had manifested, but only and solely from zeal in the work of Christ. Such a fact ought to make men pause before they ascribe unbelief and sin to the suffering Christian.

**He came nigh unto death]** A different expression to the one used in v. 27. This is the same phrase as the one found in v. 8, 'unto death', 'to the length of death', 'even as far as death'.

Quite literally the sentence runs 'Right up to death he drew nigh'. He was at death's very door.

**Hazarding his life]** This is the better supported reading. This word 'hazarding' occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It comes from a root which means 'to throw down a stake' like a gambler. The English word 'hazard' has a similar derivation, denoting originally 'a game of chance'.

Lightfoot renders it 'having gambled with his life'. Epaphroditus gladly risked his life in the work of Christ, treating it, as it were, with holy recklessness, in his consuming zeal for his Master's glory.

1 3. Finally, my brethren, <sup>1</sup> rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not irksome, <sup>1</sup> Or, *farewell*.

From this very root arose the name 'Parabolani,' a class of men, in Constantine's days, who risked their lives in nursing the sick and burying the dead during dangerous epidemics.

The 'work of Christ' in India demands more of this 'gambling with life'. There is far too much attention paid among us to our own health and ease and comfort. After all, our life is not a very high stake to throw down for the salvation of others, in the light of vv. 5-8.

**To supply]** Literally 'fill up', a word found also in Matt. xiii. 14; 1 Cor. xiv. 16; xvi. 17; Gal. vi. 2; 1 Thes. ii. 16.

Epaphroditus strove hard to 'fill up' the deficiency of the Philippians by rendering the Apostle that personal service which they, on account of distance, could not possibly offer.

**That which was lacking]** Cf. 1 Cor. xvi. 17; 2 Cor. xi. 9. Of course, it is personal ministrations which are intended. The verse seems to shew that it was overstrain arising from personal attendance, rather than stress of persecution, which led to the breakdown in Epaphroditus' health.

**Service]** The same word as in v. 17. Cf. also the note on v. 25. The whole section is a pastoral on Christian love and human sympathy. In India, with its conglomeration of races and castes, let Christian men band themselves together, in the solidarity of a common faith and mutual love, as 'brethren, fellow-workers, fellow-soldiers'.

## CHAPTER III

### vv. 1-14. WARNING AGAINST JUDAISM

**1. Finally]** That is, 'for the rest', 'to turn to a new theme' (cf. Eph. vi. 10), as though to introduce the last great topic of the Epistle, the necessity for guarding the true Gospel against error (cf. 2 Cor. xiii. 11; ch. iv 8; 1 Thes. iv. 1; 2 Thes. iii. 1). Or, 'in conclusion'. Lightfoot thinks that St. Paul, in beginning to write his farewell greetings here (iii. 1), was interrupted and led to introduce a fresh subject (iii. 2, etc.), afterwards resuming his valedictory injunctions in iv. 8. According to this theory, the warnings against false doctrines form a long parenthesis, caused by some sudden turn of affairs. But, even if we regard the word as ushering in the parting messages, we need not suppose any interruption in the intentions of the writer, since we find other instances of prolonged farewells introduced by the same expression (cf. 1 Thes. iv. 1).

but for you it is safe. Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil<sup>2</sup>

**Rejoice]** Four times this grand 'Rejoice' rings out full and clear in this Epistle (ii. 18; iii. 1; iv. 4, twice). It is, perhaps, the great message of the Letter, and the Apostle may well say 'Finally, rejoice in the Lord', for to be glad in Christ is the highest experience on earth, the believer's *ne plus ultra*.

Some translate the word 'farewell', on the hypothesis that St. Paul's, closing message was begun and interrupted here. And, truly, the happy Greek's 'adieu' was *χαίρετε*, 'Rejoice'. But the rendering of the text seems better, and is supported by ii. 18 and iv. 4, which both require 'rejoice'.

In this experience of holy Christian joy in God, we have something infinitely nobler and higher than the Mounam, or impassive and taciturn silence of the Hindu devotee.

**In the Lord]** See note on ii. 19.

**To write the same things]** What is intended by the phrase 'the same thing?'

- (a) Some have thought that St. Paul is referring to previous letters to the Philippian Church, or to his former personal conversations with the believers there. Accepting this interpretation, Conybeare and Howson translate 'to repeat the same warnings (as I emphasized by word or letter aforesaid).'
- (b) Lightfoot considers the reference to be to some subject repeatedly treated in the present Epistle, and decides in favour of 'exhortations to unity', which he understands the Apostle to be once more insisting on before he finally closes his letter.
- (c) Moule prefers to understand the words as alluding to the oft-repeated references to 'the Lord's sovereign and vital connexion with His people', and paraphrases the words thus, 'to write the same things to you; i.e., to reiterate that one thought that Christ is our glory and joy.'
- (d) Bengel and others, having regard to the immediate context, as well as to the recurrence again and again of the theme of 'joy' in the Epistle, interpret the words as accentuating the duty and privilege of rejoicing.

While all these suggestions are plausible and helpful, the last seems the simplest and most probable. It was not tedious to the Apostle to reiterate the happy message again and again; and it would certainly make for their safety to act upon it. 'The joy of the Lord is your strength' (Neh. viii. 10 margin, stronghold), aye! and your safety too.

**To me . . . not irksome, . . . for you . . . safe]** In the original

3 workers, beware of the concision : for we are the circumcision,

Greek, these words form a rhythmical line of poetry, and are probably a quotation from some Greek poet. For definite and undoubted poetical quotations by St. Paul, see Acts xvii. 28 ; 1 Cor. xv. 33 ; Tit. i. 12. We have thus the example of the great missionary Apostle affording us an excellent precedent for cultivating an acquaintance with, and making a right evangelistic use of, the classical and vernacular writings of India.

**Irksome**] This word is only found in the New Testament here and in Matt. xxv. 26 ; Rom. xii. 11. In these last two passages, it is used in the sense of 'dilatatory', but here in the active sense of 'tedious, causing weariness or hesitation'. St. Paul never wearied of helping and encouraging the converts.

**Safe**] This adjective, which comes originally from a root signifying 'not liable to fall', and so 'assured from danger', is found elsewhere only in Acts xxi. 34 ; xxii. 30 ; xxv. 26 ; Heb. vi. 19 ; in which passages it carries the meaning of certain or sure. The corresponding noun occurs in Luke i. 4 ; Acts v. 23 ; 1 Thes. v. 3.

Bengel's comment is 'spiritual joy affords the best of securities against errors, Jewish errors in particular.'

**2. Beware of**] Literally, 'see'; i.e., 'keep your eyes open', so as to be on your guard. For a similar use of the same verb see Matt. xxiv. 4 ; Mark iv. 24 ; xiii. 9 ; Luke viii. 18 ; xxi. 8 ; 1 Cor. viii. 9 ; Col. iv. 17 ; 2 John 8 ; etc.

**The dogs**] The dog, in Jewish eyes, was the type of uncleanness (see, e.g., Deut. xxiii. 18 ; Matt. vii. 6 ; 2 Pet. ii. 22 ; Rev. xxii. 15.) They employed the term as one of contempt to designate the Gentiles, regarded as ceremonially impure (cf. Matt. xv. 26, 27), perhaps with special reference to their indiscriminate use of meats without distinction between clean and unclean.

It may possibly have been adopted by the Judaistic party as a term of reproach by which they designated their baptized, but uncircumcised, fellow-Christians. Here the Apostle turns the tables on the Judaists and retorts that they are the real 'dogs', self-excluded by their pride from the Covenant blessings, seeking to satisfy themselves with the garbage of carnal ordinances and so losing the rich viands of the Father's table.

In India, where the caste system has fostered similar notions of ceremonial impurity and taught men to despise their fellows, we Christians need to be on our guard not to think or call any man 'common or unclean'. Humble-minded believers are the real aristocracy in God's sight, and the proud and high-minded have a low place in His regard. If we despise others as dogs, we shew ourselves, so runs the teaching of this

who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ

passage, to be the real dogs. Bengel, having in mind the Pharisaic party, well remarks 'Now they are called dogs, who are unwilling to become the (true) Israel of God.'

**The evil workers]** As the former title strikes at the Judaistic notions of ceremonial purity, so does this one at the Pharisaic idea of salvation by works. Their doctrine was 'works, works, works', and was diametrically opposed to the Pauline teaching of Justification by Faith (see Rom. iii. 27, 28; iv. 2, 3, 4; xi. 6; Gal. ii. 16-21; etc). They are aptly described as 'workers', or 'workmen', but as 'evil workers' (cf. 2 Cor. xi. 13, deceitful workers), for they were always busy on a bad business. The Party thus spoken of put forth great energy to win proselytes and to reduce the Gentile converts under the yoke of the law. Thus their work was evil alike in its aim and its results.

Even religious zeal and so-called Church work may be evil, if it be not energized by the love of Christ and if it have not as its sole objective the glory of the living God.

**The concision]** That is, in plain language, 'the mutilation', or 'the gashing'. Having dealt stout blows at the caste pride and carnal ordinances of the Judaistic sect, St. Paul now proceeds to attack their doctrine of circumcision. The force of the word which he here uses in parody of that doctrine will be best appreciated, if we remember that the corresponding verb is employed invariably in the LXX of those cuttings and gashings of the flesh, which were associated with heathen rites and therefore totally prohibited by the Mosaic law (see Lev. xxi. 5; 1 Kings xviii. 28; Is. xv. 2; etc). The Judaizers prided themselves on the correctness of their *circumcision*, and lo and behold! it is seen to be only the grossest *concision*, the idolatrous gashings of the heathen. St. Paul plays on the word in order to bring home to them the grievousness of their offence in opposing the simplicity of the Gospel of the grace of God. Just as, before God, they are dogs, impure and unclean, because of their ungodly disregard of others, and this notwithstanding their close attention to the minutiae of ceremonial purity; so they are gashed and mutilated Gentiles because of their un-Christian insistence on the outward rite of circumcision.

Does not this verse convey the strongest possible warnings against the perils of a system of mere externalism? It is possible to be very religious, and yet to be, in the sight of God, unclean, outcast, heathen, in the most awful meaning of the word.

Spiritual religion is clearly shewn not to consist in ceremonial observances, outward activities, carnal ordinances. It was possible for the

4 Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh: though I myself divinely ordained rite of circumcision to degenerate into a harmful mutilation. It is, alas! equally possible for the holiest rites of the Gospel to become to us empty and injurious forms.

3. **We]** The word is emphatic by position in the Greek. 'Not they, but we, are the true circumcision, since we have sought and found purity of heart in Christ'.

**The circumcision]** That is to say, 'we are the truly-circumcised, the real Israel of God' (Gal. vi. 15, 16).

Even in the Old Testament the higher and moral significance of circumcision was kept well in view, and repeatedly emphasized (Lev. xxvi. 41; Deut. x. 16; xxx. 6; etc.). When we turn to the New Testament we find the greatest stress laid on the truth that spiritual circumcision alone avails before God (Rom. ii. 28, 29; Gal. vi. 15, 16; Col. ii. 11).

**Who worship by the Spirit of God]** In v. 2, we had a three-fold description of the votaries of carnal religion; they are dogs, evil workers, the concision.

In a similar manner, St. Paul presents us here with a three-fold view of true religion.

And the first mark of true believers is this, they 'worship by the Spirit of God'. Their worship, and service (for the word covers both meanings), is in and by the energy of the Holy Ghost. The Apostle here uses the verb (*λατρεύειν*) which in the lips of Greek-speaking Jews would denote specially the temple service of Jerusalem. He says, in effect, 'We Christians who hold fast by the Gospel of grace have the real worship, and it consists not in ritual observances but in spiritual service (John iv. 23, 24) rendered to God by the Holy Spirit who liveth and worketh in us'.

The contrast is seen to be complete. The Judaist worshipped God with the carnal ordinances and traditions of men; the Christian renders Him a spiritual service, in heart and life, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

For some interesting occurrences of this word 'worship' see Luke i. 74; ii. 37; Acts xxvii. 23; Rom. i. 9; Rev. vii. 15; xii. 3. For the expression 'by the Spirit' (*πνεύματι*), see

- (a) Acts x. 38. Anointed by the Spirit.
- (b) Rom. viii. 14. Led by the Spirit.
- (c) Gal. v. 5. Waiting by the Spirit (for Christ's coming).
- (d) Gal. v. 16, 25. Walking by the Spirit.
- (e) Phil. iii. 3. Serving by the Spirit.

**Glory in Christ Jesus]** Here we have the second mark of true Christians, they 'glory in Christ Jesus'. They have fresh reason every day for rejoicing in what He is and what He does for them.



might have confidence even in the flesh : if any other man  
<sup>2</sup>thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I yet  
 2 Or, *seemeth*. more : circumcised the eighth day, of the stock 5

**Glory]** See notes on i. 26 ; ii. 16 ; where the corresponding noun is used. Render 'exult'. 'It means a joy emphatically triumphant' (Moule). Christ Jesus is the Christian's boast (See Jer. ix. 23, 24 : 1 Cor. i. 30, 31 ; 2 Cor. x. 17).

The Judaist gloried in the law (Rom. ii. 23), and vaunted his national and ritual privileges. The Christian glories in Christ Jesus, his commissioned, anointed, and all-sufficient Saviour (notice the order of the words Christ Jesus). As he draws on that Saviour's fulness, and derives fresh life and power from Him, he is constrained to raise an exulting hymn of praise, a Hallelujah chorus of rejoicing gratitude.

**Have no confidence in the flesh]** According to the literal order of the original, 'Not in the flesh are confident' (though we are confident in something else).

This is the third mark of bona fide Christians, they 'have no confidence in the flesh'. Their reliance is in Christ and Him alone.

'The flesh' is a word which is written large in the Pauline Epistles (see, e.g., Rom. vii. 18 ; viii. 4-7, 12, 13 ; Gal. v. 16-19, 24 ; vi. 8 ; Eph. ii. 3 ; Col. ii. 11, 13, etc.).

It means sometimes that 'state of man in which sin predominates' ; and, at other times, 'anything other than God taken by man as his trust and strength' (Moule).

For practical purposes, we may understand it here to denote the 'self-life,' considered as apart from God, with all those efforts and works which are inspired by self-will and wrought by self-energy. Defined negatively, 'the flesh' would be said to be 'everything which is not of the Spirit of God'.

The man of faith places no trust in anything which he is or which he can do. He casts himself upon the grace and power of God.

Once more we notice the completeness of the contrast. The Judaist placed his confidence in circumcision and so-called 'works of merit', the outcome of his own will and efforts.

The Christian abjures all works of his own, as a ground of acceptance with God, and places his trust, only and altogether, in the merits of the Saviour.

Thus we see that the three great characteristics of true Christianity are these. (a) Spiritual worship. (b) Exulting faith in Christ Jesus. (c) Complete renunciation of all self-righteousness.

Compare these with the distinctive marks of Hinduism and Islâm, the

of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews ;

very essence of which systems is salvation by works of human merit ; and is not the conclusion inevitable that our holy Faith is separated from all other creeds as far as heaven is from earth ?

The Apostle now proceeds to count up his 'flesh' advantages, only to abjure them all in one great renunciation. It will be seen that his 'gains' (v. 7), from a Jewish point of view, were seven-fold.

**4. Though I myself might have confidence even in the flesh]** Literally, 'though having myself confidence, etc.'. He places himself, for the time being, in order to enforce his argument, on the Jewish vantage ground, and speaks as one of the Judaistic party. His one object is to convince them of their error.

This noun 'confidence' is peculiar to St. Paul in the New Testament. He uses it again in 2 Cor. i. 15 ; iii. 4 ; viii. 22 ; x. 2 ; Eph. iii. 12.

**If any other . . . I more]** The great Apostle had an irreproachable position, according to all Jewish standards, as to race and birth and sect. He could out-Jew the Jew, and out-Pharisee the Pharisee. But he claims these honours only to lay them in the dust before the feet of Christ, and there abandon them as worse than useless.

**5. Circumcised the eighth day]** This is gain number one, the pride of covenant-status. Literally rendered, it runs 'As to circumcision, an eight day (child)'.

He was not an outsider, but within the ecclesiastical pale of covenanted grace. All the blessings of the Jewish Church were his by right.

Moreover, whereas the sons of Ishmael were circumcised in their thirteenth year, and proselytes in mature age, he was a true son of the Covenant, admitted to its benefits in early infancy, as befitted one of Abraham's line and lineage (Gen. xvii. 12). To the pakka Jew, this was a real bit of merit, eagerly prized and clung to.

**Of the stock of Israel]** Here is gain number two, the pride of race or caste.

A man might be truly circumcised, and yet only be a proselyte or the son of proselytes. Here, however, is no alien graft, but one descended from the original stock. True Jewish blood flowed untainted in his veins ! He could claim to be, in the purest meaning of the word, an Israelite. And what dignity attached to that name ! 'Israelite, the augustest title of all ; the absolute name, which expressed the whole dignity and glory of a member of the theocratic nation' (Trench). In the eyes of the Judaizers the Israelites were the Brahmans of the Christian community.

as touching the law, a Pharisee; as touching zeal, persecuting 6 the church; as touching the righteousness which is in the law,

**Of the tribe of Benjamin]** So stands gain number three, the pride of family or lineage.

He was a scion not only of the lordly caste of Israel, but also of one of the most notable sub-sections of that caste. It were possible to be an Israelite, and yet to be born in a renegade, or unworthy gotra or division of the race. But no! it was his proud boast that he sprang from the faithful and famous tribe of Benjamin.

Benjamin was the son of Israel's true spouse, Rachel, and not the child of one of the maidservants. He alone, of all the twelve patriarchs, was born in the land of promise (Gen. xxxv. 16-18). It was the glory of the tribe of Benjamin that they had furnished the first king of Israel, Saul, the Apostle's own great namesake. From them, too, had arisen one of the nation's illustrious Judge deliverers (Judg. iii. 15). They could boast, too, that it was one of themselves, the statesman Mordecai, who had saved the whole race from extinction (Esther ii. 5; x. 3). And had they not remained loyal to the house of David, they alone of all the outside tribes, at the time of the great disruption? Add to this that they were a warrior tribe, brave and courageous (Gen. xlix. 27), and that (as has been well pointed out) 'after thee, Benjamin' was one of Israel's battle cries (Judg. v. 14; Hos. v. 8), and it will be seen that it was not without reason that St. Paul felt it a glorious thing to be a Benjamite.

**A Hebrew of Hebrews]** This is gain number four, and it breathes with the pride of patriotism.

Saul of Tarsus might have been a true Israelite and the scion of a noble house, and yet have followed Hellenistic fashions, adopting the Greek language and Gentile civilization affected by so many of the Jews of the dispersion. But here again he stands above suspicion. He was a Hebrew through and through, as well in the New Testament usage of that term as in the Old Testament sense of the word, retaining his national language, manners, and customs. In other words he was intensely patriotic in every fibre of his being.

**As touching the law, a Pharisee]** So he expresses gain number five.

His was the pride of orthodoxy, over and above his other merits.

As regards 'law', whether considered in the abstract as general rules and principles of action, or in the concrete (the law of Moses) as a directory of ritual and conduct, he was attached to the strictest sect of orthodox Jews. Given that a man's pedigree and patriotism are beyond reproach, it is still possible for him to be lax in the observances of religion. Not so Saul of Tarsus. He was religious among the most religious. The

7 <sup>3</sup> Gr. *gains*. found blameless. Howbeit what things were  
<sup>3</sup> gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ.

Pharisees have been fitly called 'the enthusiasts of later Judaism'. They were the votaries of legal precision and the pandits of ritual observances. They had elaborated with the most scrupulous care all the niceties of an intricate ceremonialism. And even in such an inner circle of ecclesiastics, Saul had been prominently conspicuous (see Acts xxiii. 6 ; xxvi. 5 ; Gal. i. 14).

**6. As touching zeal, persecuting the church]** Here we behold gain number six. The Apostle claims to possess the pride of religious zeal.

He was a bigot among Jewish bigots, a burning zealot, hunting down and persecuting those whom he regarded as schismatics and sectarians. He cared enough for that old religion to fight, and fight fiercely, for it. It is conceivable that he might have added to his pure descent and patriotic spirit a correct orthodoxy, and yet have failed to be aggressive in his religion. But Saul of Tarsus was not one to do anything by halves. He carried fire and sword into the camp of all those whom he regarded as traitors to the Jewish cause. In this way he added an uncompromising aggressive zeal to his other claims to be considered a Jew of Jews.

**As touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless]** So he expresses gain number seven. He can claim the pride of self-righteousness.

The sentence reads literally 'In respect of righteousness which (consists) in law, having become blameless'. That is, he was blamelessly correct, from the legal standpoint, in his observance of the formal precepts of the Mosaic code. If righteousness were to be had by the law, Saul of Tarsus had it !

This was the very acme of his merits, to Jewish eyes. He might have possessed all the six qualities which have been enumerated, and yet have come short somehow in respect of legal righteousness, as they understood it. But no ! he had gone in for the whole thing, and omitted nothing which could assure him a place of highest merit in the Jewish Church. None could point out fault or flaw in his strict and conscientious discharge of all the prescribed duties of their religion. He had been a very paragon of Hebrew piety.

**Blameless]** See note on ii. 15. Saul the Pharisee was unblamed by his co-religionists. He was admittedly a true exponent of all that was best in their race and creed.

Thus this intrepid Jew could fearlessly lay claim to pride of covenant status, pride of race, pride of family, pride of country, pride of orthodoxy, pride of religious zeal, and pride of self-righteousness. In other words,

Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency 8  
of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I

he could boast a 'full sacramental position' (Moule); an irreproachable pedigree; domestic traditions pure and strict; a commendable conservatism in his love of race and country; a place in the inner circle of the strictly orthodox; a burning zeal for the creed which he professed; a faultless observance of all the minutiae of religion.

Here, then, we have a man who, to use Indian language, was born and bred in the very highest caste, and in one of the noblest gotras of that caste, and whose position in the social scale and scrupulosity in the strict performance of all the customs of his fathers were absolutely above suspicion. He was fired, too, by love of country and a contempt for all things foreign. In short, he may well represent Indians of the most orthodox and conservative type. He would have passed muster with the strictest pandits of the day!

What will he do with all these supposed advantages when he hears and obeys the call of Christ? Will he refuse to part with them? or, while yielding up some of them, at least cling to as many of them as possible? Let him tell us in his own words.

**7. What things were gain to me]** Literally 'whatever things were to me gains'. Notice the plural 'gains'. He has been enumerating his advantages, one by one, like a miser eagerly counting up his coins. Every item likely to attract Jewish admiration has been duly paraded, until the writer is seen, from the Hebrew point of view, to be the proud possessor of a whole wealth of riches.

**Gain]** For this word, see the note on ch. i. 21.

**These have I counted loss]** There is emphasis on the pronoun 'these'. He has a good look at his gains, so to speak, before deliberately renouncing them for ever.

**Loss]** This word is purposely placed, in the Greek, at the end of the entire sentence (These I have counted, on account of the Christ,—LOSS), for the sake of greater emphasis. It is as though the writer paused to choose, with calm deliberation, the word which was to convey his final verdict on the gains he was renouncing. He can find no better term wherewith to express his true estimate of them than this word LOSS.

We must note that, in contrast to the plural form of the preceding word, this one is in the singular, loss, not losses. St. Paul masses together all his proud advantages, once viewed as gains, under one single head as loss. What a radical change must have taken place

9 <sup>4</sup> Or, *refuse*. suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but <sup>4</sup> dung, that I may gain Christ, and be found

in the moral being of the man before he could take his pen and write LOSS in large letters across that list of reputed gains! This noun loss, outside this and the following verses, is only found, in the New Testament, in Acts xxvii. 10, 21. The reference suggests that the Apostle has made as complete a wreck of all his old self-righteousness as that which befell the cargo and tackling of the vessel in which he sailed towards Rome!

Are we, in India, as ready as was the Apostle Paul to write loss over all that we used to prize as birth-status and caste advantages? Why cling to the titles and customs of caste, when Christ presents Himself to us as our 'all in all'?

**For Christ]** Rather, 'on account of the Christ'. The new is better! St. Paul has discovered now that the crucified Jesus is none other than the glorious Messiah, triumphant, exalted, the King of kings and Lord of lords. For the sake of the supreme treasure, who would not throw away his little baubles? We see here that a true vision of the Christ, with a full appreciation of His person and work, His claims and glories, is the surest way to estimate, at their proper value, the paltry gains and accepted standards of the world. Therefore let us 'consider Him', and, in the light of His glory, all else will seem dim and vain.

For the full force of the preposition 'for' see note on next verse.

**8. Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss]** Did St. Paul regret his former choice? This verse is the reply. He hastens to confirm and extend the decision of the past.

'Nay moreover (such is the force of the particles) I count (now, at this present moment; not only 'have I counted' in the past; v. 7) all things (in addition to the 'these things' of v. 7) to be loss, etc.'

So far from regretting the step he had taken, he is willing to go further [still, even all lengths, in the direction of renunciation for a fuller possession of Christ his *summum bonum*. Weighed in the scales against Him, all else is nothing. His reputation; his intellectual brilliancy; his missionary sufferings; let them all count as loss in view of his Lord's surpassing glory. We should not calculate how *little* we can give up for Christ, rather let us seek how *much* we can renounce for Him.

**For the excellency of the knowledge]** This may be rendered in either of two ways.

- (a) 'On account of the super-eminence of the knowledge, etc.'
- (b) 'By reason of the super-eminence of the knowledge, etc.'

*5 Or, not  
having as my  
righteousness  
that which is  
of the law.*

in him, <sup>5</sup>not having a righteousness of mine own, *even* that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteous-

The former of these implies that he counts all things to be loss in order to obtain the surpassing knowledge of Christ; while the latter suggests that the knowledge of Christ so completely transcends all other objects of desire that they are dimmed into insignificance in comparison.

The preposition is the same one used in the preceding verse and both there and here is capable of this two-fold explanation.

The meaning, on the whole, seems to be that St. Paul esteemed, moment by moment, all things as loss in view of the immeasurable superiority of a personal acquaintance with Christ and a constant appropriation, by faith, of His fulness. To know Christ, in the proper sense of the word, is to enjoy Him.

**Excellency]** The corresponding verb occurs in iv. 7, 'surpasseth all understanding'.

**Christ Jesus my Lord]** The full title is purposely given, and follows suitably on the word 'super-eminence'.

The Apostle reverently lays the hand of personal claim on his dear Master, 'my Lord'. He had indeed counted all things loss. But his hands were not empty; he had gained Christ as his very own.

See the notes on ch. i. 1, 3 for his relationship to his Divine Master.

**For whom]** The preposition is the same as in the previous phrases 'for Christ' and 'for the excellency', and may bear the same double meaning.

**I suffered the loss of all things]** The tense of the verb (Aorist) points to the crisis of his conversion, when he took a new stand and embarked upon a new life. It involved rejection by his old friends and ostracism by the Sanhedrim. The verb 'suffered the loss' (one word in the Greek) is cognate with the noun 'loss' above, and its use here in the passive voice suggests that, just as he had counted all things loss for Christ, so he had been made to feel the loss in the obloquy and opposition which ensued. We may render 'I was mulcted of my all'. It was no merely rhetorical statement that he 'counted all things loss'. He had to live out the consequences of his choice in actual experience.

**Do count]** The same verb as above, in the same tense. 'I count all things to be loss'; 'I count them but dung'. It was not only a past experience, but a present and constant realization.

6 Gr. *upon*.

ness which is of God <sup>6</sup> by faith: that I may know

**Dung]** This word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. Two meanings are attached to it.

- (a) 'Refuse' (R. V. margin), i.e., 'the leavings of a meal', or 'the food thrown away from the table'. This interpretation follows the opinion common among the Greeks which derived it from a compound expression meaning 'to cast anything to dogs'.

The Apostle was willing to throw all his proud pretensions 'to the dogs' for Christ's sake, as useless refuse.

May there not be a side reference here to the Judaizing party, the dogs of v. 2?

- (b) 'Ordure,' the excrementitious matter rejected as worthless by the body. This is probably the true derivation of the word, but both meanings are allowable.

It would be difficult to find figures more fully calculated to express the complete abandonment which St. Paul had made of his caste pride and self-righteousness.

**That I may gain Christ]** The verb corresponds exactly with the noun of v. 7. He does not regard his renunciation as involving a loss, in the real sense of the word, but as bringing a great gain. Infinite profit is the result of his choice. The great gain, Christ, enormously outweighs those paltry gains which he had once prized so dearly. In Christ are contained 'all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge', all the riches of grace and glory. If we possess the Blessor, all His blessings will be ours.

The verb 'gain' is found again in Matt. xvi. 26; xviii. 15; xxv. 16, 17, 20, 22; Acts xxvii. 21; 1 Cor. ix. 19, 20, 21, 22; Jas. iv. 13; 1 Pet. iii. 1; and these passages will well repay study and classification.

**May gain]** The tense need present no difficulty. Moule's explanation seems both simple and sufficient, viz., that the Apostle is 'thinking the past over again.' He has been referring to the crisis of his conversion, and speaks from that standpoint, 'I suffered the loss of all things that I might gain Christ'; though he has just paused to add in a parenthesis 'and I do still count them as dung'. Cf. Matt. xix. 13; 1 Tim. i. 16; 1 John iii. 5; where a similar construction is used.

**9. And be found in Him]** 'found in Him', that is, at any given moment, both here and hereafter, both now and for ever.

**In Him]** as our source of life and sphere of being and doing, as the branches abide in the vine (Joh. xv. 1-8), as the members are united with the head (1 Cor. xii. 12).



him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship

**A righteousness of my own]** The word 'righteousness' often connotes special ideas in the Pauline writings. In particular, it stands prominently to view in his great doctrine of Justification by Faith. It will be found, in many passages, to denote a meritorious title to acceptance in the eyes of the law of God (see Rom. iii. 10-26; iv. 3, 5, 6, 9, 11, 13; v. 9, 17-19; x. 3-10; etc., etc.).

The Apostle here clearly repudiates all claim to be so accepted on any ground of his own personal merits or works. No righteousness of his own exists. There is nothing in himself on which a holy God could look with favour and approval. He has no ground for acceptance apart from Jesus Christ.

This doctrine cannot be too strongly insisted on in a country where the non-Christian religions are all based upon works of human merit.

**Which is of the law]** Better '(namely) that of (or derived from) law'. We may regard this in two ways.

- (a) The Mosaic law, as a code, to be observed in all its details in order to gain acceptance in the sight of God. Such was the Pharisees' idea of righteousness, and, in pursuing it, they lamentably failed (Rom. x. 3).
- (b) Law generally, considered as a divine universal code, carrying with it the stern promise 'Do this and thou shalt live'. Righteousness would then consist in such a perfect compliance with all the demands of this 'universal covenanting precept' (Moule) as would entitle man to God's favour. This interpretation may be considered supported by such passages as Rom. iii. 20-31; Gal. iii. 24; etc., in which the word law is used normally without the definite article.

The latter interpretation will be seen to be an extension and amplification of the former one: but both are true. Any such righteousness as man claims apart from Christ must be considered as derived from law and from a personal conformity with the principles and requirements of such law, whether it be regarded as prescribed in written codes, or as an unwritten system which man endeavours to carry out on his own initiative and in his own strength.

The Apostle emphatically disclaims all righteousness of this type. In the light of the glorious holiness of the living Lord, he had seen the utter worthlessness of human pretensions to the possession of either intrinsic or acquired merit.

**That which is through faith in Christ]** Here 'Christ' is clearly held up to view as the *object* of faith and the *cause* of our acceptance before

of his sufferings, becoming conformed unto his death;

God; while 'faith' is represented as the *means* by which His merits are appropriated and received.

The Christian believer's righteousness rests entirely on the person and work of the Redeemer, and is the result of claiming, in trustful faith, the merits of His precious and vicarious death (cf. Rom. iii. 21-28; v. 1, 2, 9-11; Gal. ii. 16; iii. 11-14; Eph. i. 7; ii. 8, 9; Col. i. 20-22; etc.). The Saviour's perfect righteousness is imputed to the man who, despairing of all efforts of his own to find favour in the sight of God, casts himself unreservedly, in the abandonment of faith, upon the merits of his Lord's propitiatory work. Through those merits he finds acceptance and forgiveness, and is reckoned righteous. From that moment begins a life of sanctification, in which the righteousness of Christ, His holiness of character, is continually imparted to him by the power and operation of the Holy Ghost.

Faith is best defined as personal trust. It implies a full reliance on the word of God and the redemptive work of Christ, a personal trust in a personal Saviour. Under one figure, it is the complete turning away from self to lean only and altogether upon God. Under another figure, it is the hand by which we accept the divine gifts.

**The righteousness which is of God]** Or, 'which is (derived) from God'. Literally 'which is out of God'.

Notice the direct antithesis to the former clause of the verse. The Christian's righteousness is 'not derived from law' (*ἐκ νόμου*); but it is 'derived from God' (*ἐκ θεοῦ*). The Father's love, free and undeserved, is its *originating cause*, as the Son's redemptive work is its *meritorious cause*. Thus the righteousness is divine, being from God, through God, and in God; and there is not an atom of human merit in it. Being thus divine, it is perfect, faultless, trustworthy.

**By faith]** Literally 'upon faith', i.e., 'on the condition or terms of faith' (cf. Acts iii. 16; R. V. margin).

The two references to faith in this verse are seen, therefore, to present the double truth that our acceptance before God is alike *on the condition of our faith* and *through the receptive act of faith*. God bestows the great gift of righteousness on the sincere believer, putting it into the hand of his faith, and the condition consists in the willing stretching forth of that hand, in obedience to God's invitation, for a glad acceptance of the gift.

**10. That I may know Him]** This verse, as Moule points out, may be said to deal with *sanctification*, as verse nine deals with *justification*.

if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the **11**

The force of the construction is 'in order to know Him'. It resumes the thought of v. 8, 'for the surpassingness of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord'.

The great end which St. Paul had in view in renouncing every shred of self-righteousness and in embracing God's revealed righteousness was this,—'the spiritual knowledge of Christ and of His power to sanctify and glorify by assimilation to Himself' (Moule).

The verb translated 'know' relates to the knowledge of recognition rather than to that of inherent perception. It carries the ideas of 'recognize, feel, appropriate' (Lightfoot).

**To know Him]** This phrase contains in itself a very summary of true religion. All real Christian experience consists in 'knowing' Christ and drawing on His infinite resources (cf. John xvii. 3). The tense of the verb (Aorist) is best represented by the rendering 'In order that I may come to know Him' (as by some decisive act). Cf. Acts xxii. 14; 1 Cor. ii. 14; Eph. iii. 19; where the same form is used. It suggests to us that we may be brought into a position of 'knowing' Christ, as perhaps we never knew Him before, in some crisis of special adjustment, followed by a life-long process of growing acquaintance with Him. Since His love and grace and power ever surpass our fullest comprehension and our highest experience of them, the Christian's life of faith may be represented fitly as a long series of new and ever clearer insights into the plenitude of Christ; a constant and repeated 'getting to know' what He is and what He can do for the soul which trusts in Him. Thus our experience should be one of 'frequent glad surprises' as we 'come to know', from time to time, more and more of the 'unsearchable riches of Christ'. The man who in this way 'follows on to know the Lord' is like a mountaineer who, as he climbs from ridge to ridge, ever pursuing his upward course, is gladdened by fresh and wider views of the glorious landscape outspread before him.

Be it observed that this is not the dreamy knowledge of the mystic. Still less is it the cold and speculative Jñānam of Hindu philosophy. It is that warm, stimulating, sanctifying knowledge of a personal Saviour which transforms our every action and assimilates our character to His. Its effect on St. Paul's life and conduct is seen in the vigorous verses which immediately follow.

Let us Christians of India seek to realize that true religion consists not merely in accepting the creed of Christianity but in 'knowing Him' with the knowledge which makes holy.

**And the power of His resurrection]** How full of meaning are these words to the believer! The Resurrection of our Lord has brought us *life*

12 dead. Not that I have already obtained, or am already made

(John xiv. 19); *peace* (John xx. 19, 20); *hope* (1 Pet. i. 3); *holiness* (Rom. vi. 4-14). In other words, the Resurrection is to us,

- (a) The evidence of our justification. Rom. iv. 24, 25; 1 Cor. xv. 14-18.
- (b) The assurance of our glorification. 1 Cor. xv. 20-23; Phil. iii. 20, 21; 1 Thes. iv. 14-18.
- (c) The pledge of our sanctification. Rom. v. 10; vi 4-7; viii. 11; 2 Cor. iv 10; Eph. ii. 5; Col. iii. 1-4; etc.
- (d) The guarantee of our power for service. John vii. 39; xx. 22; Acts i. 8; ii. 31; etc.

In particular, the teaching of the Epistles written during the first Roman imprisonment lays stress on the truth of the Resurrection of Christ as bringing us strength for holiness and power for service.

The power of His Resurrection prevails over death, sin, the world, the flesh, and the devil. It means victory all along the line.

Before this 'power' stones of difficulty rolled away (Mark xvi. 4); locked doors opened (John xx. 19); unbelief fled (John xx. 20, 28); the whole world was stirred (Acts xvii. 3, 6). There is no limit to the possibilities of that 'power' in the life of the believer (Eph. i. 19-23). Here is a talisman against temptation, trial, and despondency, 'the power of His Resurrection'.

In a land like this, where the popular cultus consists chiefly in the worship of deities who are dead men apotheosized, and the religion of the more thoughtful lies in the direction of pantheistic speculations, it behoves us to proclaim with no uncertain sound the Gospel of the Resurrection, and to show men, by our preaching and example, that Christ lives to-day and that we derive from Him, moment by moment, the power to live a holy life.

**The fellowship of His sufferings]** Cf. 2 Cor. i. 5-7; Col. i. 24; 1 Pet. iv. 13. This 'partnership' in Christ's sufferings means 'carrying the cross' for Him in the sense of 'bearing His reproach' (Heb. xiii. 13). It is the daily following in the steps of Him Who endured the 'gainsaying of sinners against Himself' (Heb. xii. 3) at the severest cost of pain, mental and physical.

A study of the following passages will shew that the normal meaning of the word 'cross' (as it relates to the Christian's cross-bearing) in the New Testament is the shame and suffering which befall him for Christ's sake and the Gospel's; Matt. x. 36-38; Luke ix. 22, 23; xiv. 25-27; Gal. v. 11; vi. 12; Heb. vi. 6; xii. 2; xiii. 13; cf. Acts v. 41; 1 Cor. iv. 13.

<sup>7</sup> Or, *apprehend, seeing that also I was apprehended.*

perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may <sup>7</sup> apprehend that for which also I was apprehended

This fact is well illustrated by the usage of the word 'suffering' in St. Peter's First Epistle, where we may learn, beyond a doubt, that the 'cross-sufferings' of the Christian are those which come in consequence of a wholehearted and conscientious obedience to Christ and His word, without regard to the standards and opinions of the world. We suffer, in this sense,

(a) 'For conscience toward God', 1 Pet. ii. 19, 20. (b) 'For righteousness' sake', iii. 14. (c) 'For well-doing', iii. 17. (d) 'For the name of Christ', iv. 13-15. (e) 'According to the will of God', iv. 19. Cf. note on i. 29.

We understand, therefore, that participation in the sufferings of Christ involves a deep experience of union with Him in that contradiction, contumely, and opposition, which are sure to be the lot of those who 'will live godly' in this 'present evil age'.

Lightfoot's note is worth quoting. 'The participation in Christ's sufferings partly follows upon and partly precedes the "power of His resurrection." It follows as the practical result on life; it precedes, as leading up to the full and final appreciation of this power.'

This is true in experience. We die (in the metaphorical sense) to live; and we live to die.

**Becoming conformed unto His death]** Moule well remarks 'the immediate thought is that of spiritual harmony with the dying Lord's state of will.' Cf. 2 Cor. iv. 10.

Whilst we can have no partnership in the vicarious sufferings of Christ as a propitiation for sin, we have a very real interest and share in the meaning and results of that, His precious death; for we were crucified with Him (Gal. ii. 20; v. 24; vi. 14); we died with Him (Rom. vi. 8; Col. ii. 20); and it is ours to realize, by faith, in experience, what God has declared to be true in fact and doctrine. This realization will take us to Gethsemane, for the renunciation of self-will, however painful the experience may be. It will take us further, to Calvary, there to reckon ourselves dead, in the death of our dear Lord, to the flesh and to the world. It will lead us, moreover, to accept, day by day, that position of which Christ's death is the example and type, viz., the attitude of perfect surrender to the divine will and of non-response to everything which is not well pleasing to God.

The verb 'becoming conformed' a compound of the word 'form' (*μορφή*) in ii. 7, occurs only in this passage, but its corresponding adjective is found in Rom. viii. 29; Phil. iii. 21. It is striking to find a double

- 13 <sup>8</sup> Many ancient authorities omit *yet*. by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself <sup>8</sup> yet to have apprehended: but one thing

occurrence of so unusual a word in the same chapter! 'Conformed to His death'. v. 10. 'Conformed to His glory'. v. 21. If we desire the latter, we must first experience the former. The tense of the verb (present participle) indicates a continual process of growing conformity. Pride and worldly-mindedness, in any Christian, are plain contradictions of this position 'conformed unto His death.'

**11. If by any means I may attain unto]** The Apostle uses 'language of contingency' when emphasizing the believer's duty (cf. 1 Cor. ix. 24-27), but this does not involve the least uncertainty as to the final issue (Rom. viii. 31-39; 2 Tim. i. 12; iv. 6-8; etc.). God's grace in the believer's preservation and the Christian's duty of constant perseverance run through the New Testament like two parallel lines. Both doctrines must be duly emphasized. But, though God's sovereign grace on the one side, and man's will and duty on the other side, seem to our present sight like widely-separated mountain peaks, we shall find one day that both alike have their base on the same everlasting rock.

Since the final glory is still future to the Christian, he may fairly speak of it as not yet his in actual possession and enjoyment, though he entertains no doubt, in his inmost soul, that, on the authority of God's own word, his title to it is validly secured and his portion in it well assured. (see John x. 28, 29; 1 Pet. i. 4, 5; 1 John iii. 1, 2; vv. 20, 21; etc.). The language of modest hope is by no means inconsistent with convictions of glad certainty.

**The resurrection from the dead]** This particular word (a compound of the usual term for 'resurrection' and the preposition 'out of') is not found elsewhere in the New Testament. But an equivalent phrase is sometimes used (Luke xx. 35; Acts iv. 2; 1 Pet. i. 3).

Holy Scripture distinguishes between the general resurrection of the dead for judgment and the resurrection of the saints to life and glory (see Dan. xii. 2; John v. 29; Acts xxiv. 15; Rev. xx. 4, 5, 6, 12, 13). The latter of these, which is literally a resurrection (of the saints) from out of the (other) dead (1 Thes. iv. 16), and which is variously styled 'the first resurrection', 'the resurrection of life', and 'the resurrection of the just', is undoubtedly referred to here. The Apostle's hope was fixed on that glorious time when the 'trump of God' shall sound and those who 'sleep in Jesus' shall awake to everlasting glory. He has the same blessed hope in view in vv. 20, 21, verses which throw light on the meaning of the present passage. To have a place in that 'first resurrection', to share in its triumph, to exchange 'the body of humiliation'

*I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and*

for 'the body of glory', this was to him, as he wrote, the goal of his ambition and the climax of his bliss.

Some have held the opinion that a still more special and exclusive resurrection is intended here, arising again of certain peculiarly qualified and privileged saints, who, from the circumstance of their having watched constantly for Christ's appearing, or on account of abnormal attainments in holiness, will be found entitled to a sort of initial resurrection. According to this interpretation, it was St. Paul's ambition to be numbered in that select company. But this opinion is open to serious objection, and it certainly has no clear warranty of Scripture.

**12. Not that I have already obtained]** Quite literally, 'not that I already received'. The tense (Aorist) points back to some definite epoch of time, and there is little doubt that the time in question is that of his conversion.

The object to the verb 'obtained' is not expressed but understood. We may supply either 'the resurrection of the dead' or 'the prize' which is spoken of in the verses which follow.

The sense clearly is 'at my conversion I received forgiveness of sins: but I did not receive the final crown of glory. I received the free gift of eternal life; but I did not receive the resurrection body. That resurrection and that crown are still future. I shall receive them but they are not yet in my grasp. And so I press forward and I follow on'.

Thus there is no ring of doubt about the passage. It is the simple admission of an obvious fact. The prize is not yet in our hands, and so we must still keep the runner's course.

**Or am already made perfect]** The perfect tense of the verb points to a completed action with results continued in the present, 'not as though I were now already perfected'.

The passage is usually explained as relating to moral perfection. 'The process was incomplete which was to develop his being for the life of glory' (Moule). The work of transformation was still going on (Rom. xii. 2). He was still being 'changed into the . . . image, from glory to glory' (2 Cor. iii. 18). Not yet had the master sculptor, with His unerring chisel, done the last strokes which were to produce a perfect symmetry in the Apostle.

This explanation is true. Moral perfection, in the absolute sense of the word, was as truly in the future, for St. Paul, as the 'prize' which he had set before him. Real perfection will not be ours till we receive the resurrection-body (v. 21).

14 stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on

It is perhaps worth noticing, however, that the same verb is used, in a few passages, of something like official or ministerial perfection (Luke xiii. 32; Heb. ii. 10; v. 9). Our Lord was morally perfect, from first to last, but these texts show that He had to qualify for office, to become ministerially perfect, by certain experiences essential to His Messianic character and by the discipline of life.

If such a thought is admissible here, it admirably suits the context. 'I am not yet "perfected" as a runner in my ministerial course, for part of the "path" lies still ahead. I have not yet "reached the goal." There are still souls to be won before I wear the crown of life.' This would harmonize, too, with Acts xx. 24, in which St. Paul uses the same verb (though in the active voice), 'That I may accomplish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus.'

Very healthy, stimulating and invigorating are the words which follow. It is not the language of doubt or uncertainty or despair. There is a clear and joyous ring about the whole which cheers us on our way and bids us brace ourselves together and strain every nerve in our eager progress towards the final goal. 'I PRESS ON'. 'I STRETCH FORWARD'. 'I FOLLOW AFTER'.

**I press on]** The present tense deserves attention, 'I am pressing on', moment by moment.

The runner's race is a favourite metaphor with St. Paul (Acts xx. 24; 1 Cor. ix. 24-27; Gal. ii. 2; v. 7; 2 Tim. iv. 7). This verb, which means to 'pursue', as a hunter the chase, is usually translated 'follow after' in R. V., except in passages where the sense requires 'persecute'. The Apostle has already employed it in v. 6, 'persecuting the Church'. Beforetime, he had 'pursued' Christians to hunt them down; now he 'pursues' the prize, and, in the pursuit, strives earnestly to make men Christians.

We are bidden to 'follow after' hospitality (Rom. xii. 13, marg.); the things of peace (Rom. xiv. 19); love (1 Cor. xiv. 1); righteousness, etc., (1 Tim. vi. 11; 2 Tim. ii. 22); that which is good (1 Thes. v. 15); and peace (Heb. xii. 14; 1 Pet. iii. 11).

**That I may apprehend]** This verb means to 'grasp', to 'lay hold of', to 'take by putting (the hand) down upon'. It is formed from the simpler verb used in the former clause of the verse 'obtain' by prefixing a preposition to direct its action and intensify its force. The very same word is found again in 1 Cor. ix. 24, and in a similar connexion.



<sup>9</sup> Or, *upward*. toward the goal unto the prize of the <sup>9</sup>high

**That for which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus]** This may be rendered either thus, or otherwise as follows, 'Because I was apprehended of Christ Jesus'. The translation of the text lays stress on God's object in saving him; whereas the alternative rendering emphasizes the Apostle's duty in pressing forward. Of these the former seems preferable.

The sense then is, 'Christ grasped me, at my conversion, with the express purpose of giving me eternal glory; and so, inspired with that thought, I press on to grasp the glory reserved for me'.

Moule's paraphrase is excellent: 'Yes! I press on to seize that crown, with the animating thought that it was on purpose that I might seize it that the Lord seized me (laid violent hands upon me, to pluck me from ruin, and to constrain me into His salvation and service)'.

**13. Brethren]** This word of loving address is intended both to attract attention and to prepare the Philippians for the solemn appeal he is about to make (v. 15).

**I count not myself to have apprehended]** There is emphasis in the Greek both on the 'I' and the 'myself', but it is the 'egotism of humility'. Bengel thinks that others may perhaps have had great ideas of St. Paul's attainments, and that he wishes to speak modestly in consequence. But the meaning is really as follows, 'others may possibly consider themselves to have reached the goal, but, as for me, I have not yet seized the prize'.

The object to the verb 'apprehended' (or 'grasped') is not expressed, but the context shows it to be the 'prize'.

He may possibly have in his mind, in so writing, the Antinomian teachers alluded to in vv. 15-19.

**But one thing (I do)]** The intense earnestness of the writer is shown in the very terseness of the phrase. No verb is expressed, and we cannot even decide certainly whether the 'one thing' is meant to be the subject or the object of the elliptical sentence. If the former, the sense is, 'but one thing (is before me, as my aim in life)'. If the latter, the meaning is represented by the rendering of the text.

The phrase is bold and striking in its isolation, and is a fitting index of the great Apostle's glowing enthusiasm. His thoughts, energies, efforts were all concentrated on the 'one thing'.

**Forgetting the things which are behind]** This is interpreted by many to mean 'the part of the course already finished'.

Moule remarks that he does not say the things 'around' or the things

15 calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us, therefore, as many as

‘present’, for ‘the unwearied runner is already beyond any point just reached’.

**Forgetting]** The tense of the verb (present participle) points to ‘a continual forgetting’, as each event and experience is left behind and becomes part of the past.

**The things which are behind]** The same phrase occurs in Luke ix. 62; xvii. 31; John vi. 66 (back); all interesting references.

**Stretching forward]** This is quite a ‘picture-word’ in the original, and shows us the runner ‘stretching out’ his head and body ‘towards’ the goal, in the eagerness of his desire to reach it. It does not occur again in the New Testament.

Another suggestion is that the metaphor here employed is derived from the chariot races of the Roman circus, in which the charioteer bent over his horses, lash in hand, to urge them toward the goal. It has been pointed out, however, that, since the charioteer, in such a race, would require to ‘look back’ at times, to keep his eye on other competitors who might be pressing him close, the context favours the illustration of the foot race.

A word of this sort, conveying the ideas of intense earnestness and ceaseless activity, has a special message for us in a tropical country, where the natural tendency is to be lax and dilatory. We need more of the spur and stimulus of a zeal like St. Paul’s.

**The things which are before]** The phrase is peculiar to this passage. We are ever to be looking ahead and going ahead, advancing ‘more and more’. The expression is a pregnant one, in such a context. It includes the vision of the coming Christ, the resurrection of life, the redemption of the body, and the crown of eternal glory.

**14. I press on]** The same word as in v. 12, and in the same tense, ‘I am pressing on’, in a constant and unceasing progress.

**Toward the goal]** In the Greek this precedes the verb, ‘goal-ward I press’. St. Paul’s was no uncertain course (1 Cor. ix. 26). He knew at what he was aiming. This word, which is used in the classics of archery rather than of racing, may be taken to denote the ‘mark’ which locates the goal.

**Unto the prize]** This word occurs again only in 1 Cor. ix. 24, while a corresponding verb ‘to play the arbiter in awarding the prize’ is peculiar to Col. iii. 15.

The prize in the foot-races of the stadium was a chaplet of green leaves

be perfect, be thus minded : and if in anything ye are otherwise

usually those of the pine tree. Hence the appropriateness of the Apostle's description of it as 'corruptible' (1 Cor. ix. 25). For the nature of the victor's wreath coveted by St. Paul, see 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8 ; Rev. ii. 10.

The expression 'unto the prize' suggests unwearied running until the prize be actually grasped.

This 'prize' is no award to human merit; rather it is 'Love's approval of the service of love' (Moule).

**Of the high calling of God]** Literally 'of the upward calling of God'. Lightfoot renders 'heavenward calling'; and Bengel connects it with v. 20 ; 'heaven, from whence also we wait for a Saviour.'

Cf. the use of the same word 'upward' or 'above' in John viii. 23 ; Gal. iv. 26 ; Col. iii. 1, 2.

The Christian's 'calling' is 'up' or 'above' alike as regards its origin, operation and final outcome.

It is styled (a) The upward calling. Phil. iii. 14. (b) The holy calling. 2 Tim. i. 9. (c) The heavenly calling. Heb. iii. 1.

The word 'calling' occurs again only in Rom. xi. 29 ; 1 Cor. i. 26 ; vii. 20 ; Eph. i. 18 ; iv. 1, 4 ; 2 Thes. i. 11 ; 2 Tim. i. 9 ; Heb. iii. 1 ; 2 Pet. 1. 10.

A careful study of all eleven passages will show that the prevailing sense of the word (and the same remark is true of the usage in the Epistles of the verb 'call' from which it is derived) is that of God's internal call to the soul, a call which is effectual, and that it does not merely stand for a general external invitation.

Not without reason does the Apostle describe the award which he is looking for as 'the prize of the high calling of God', since that 'prize' is not only the final result of God's gracious 'call', but is made possible to us and secured for us thereby.

**Of God in Christ Jesus]** For 'the Father is the caller' (Rom. viii. 29, 30 ; ix. 11 ; 1 Cor. i. 9 ; Gal. i. 6, 15 ; 1 Thes. ii. 12 ; 2 Thes. ii. 14 ; 2 Tim. i. 9 ; 1 Pet. i. 15 ; v. 10) ; and it is in and through the Son that we become partakers of that calling (cf. 1 Cor. vii. 22 ; 1 Pet. v. 10).

#### vv. 15-21. WARNING AGAINST ANTINOMIANISM.

The Apostle here, apparently, turns from the partisans of legalism to the advocates of license. He has in mind, it would appear, Antinomian teachers, whether at Rome, or in Philippi, or elsewhere, who affected an unchristian perfectionism, and whose presumptuous claims to spiritual knowledge and liberty led them into a laxity of living which soon degenerated into positive unholiness. Against such perverters of the Gospel his protests and warnings here are peculiarly solemn.

16 minded, even this shall God reveal unto you: only, where-  
unto we have already attained, by that same *rule* let us walk.

**15. 'As many as be perfect']** The adjective here used denotes those who are 'mature men', as opposed to 'immature children' (1 Cor. xiv. 20; Eph. iv. 13; Heb. v. 14).

It is also found with the meaning of 'men of ripe knowledge and attainments' (1 Cor. ii. 6; and, possibly) Col. i. 28; Jas. i. 4; iii. 2; though, in the last three passages a further idea also seems to be present); and hence Conybeare and Howson render this passage, 'who are ripe in understanding'. Lightfoot thinks that the 'perfect' are practically synonymous with the 'spiritual' as described in 1 Cor. (cf. 1 Cor. ii. 6 with iii. 1).

Thus a double idea seems prominent in the word; it combines the notion of *adult Christian manhood* with that of *clear spiritual faculty and discernment*.

'A "perfect" Christian may, in this respect, have spiritual *faculty* well developed, and yet be very far from "perfected" in spiritual *character*' (Moule). This explanation obviates an apparent contradiction of v. 12.

Some consider that a touch of irony is present in the words, as those against whom this warning is directed probably affected to themselves the title of 'perfect ones', and boasted their 'initiation' into higher Christian knowledge, while all the time their lives were palpably inconsistent with their profession. St. Paul may, therefore, be combining stern reproof with gentle sarcasm, 'We call ourselves, forsooth, "full-grown Christians"'. Let us see to it, then, that we are what we profess, with such self-complacency, to be. Let us cease from airing our attainments and press on to the better things before us.

It is only fair to notice, however, that the idea of *moral character* as well as *faculty* is distinctly present in some of the passages in which the word is used (Matt. v. 48; xix. 21; and cf. Col. i. 28; Jas. i. 4; iii. 2). If this be in view here, irony, of course, is absent, and we should have to understand that the Apostle is calling on those who have obtained some measure of completeness in Christ to press on to still greater things.

In any case, the whole force of the context is against resting satisfied with present attainments, whether in character or service, and against tolerating sin in any shape or form.

**Be thus minded]** Literally, 'Mind this'. The same phrase is found in i. 7; ii. 2, 5; where see notes. The meaning, of course, is 'let us set our minds on forgetting the things behind, stretching forward to the things before, and pressing on to the prize'.

**If in anything ye are otherwise minded]** Literally, 'If ye mind (or regard) anything differently'; i.e., 'if in anything that I have said, ye

Brethren, be ye imitators together of me, and mark them **17**

cannot feel and see with me'. Lightfoot renders 'otherwise' by 'amiss', and understands the sense to be, 'if you are at fault on any subject (though sound at the core)'. But this seems a needless interpretation.

**Even this shall God reveal, etc.]** This does not imply, of course, a further special verbal revelation on God's part. The case is fully satisfied by understanding that He would make it plain to them by the work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts and lives. The true Christian's life is a constant series of fresh apprehensions in experience of holy truths already revealed in Scripture. The fuller our obedience to God's will and word, the clearer will become our understanding of that will and word. Our spiritual knowledge will increase as our practical godliness increases (Gen. xviii. 17-19; Ps. xxv. 12; John vii. 17).

Let us not, in India, crave after special signs and visions, but let us humbly and obediently do the will of God. In His written word are clearly revealed to us 'all things that pertain to life and godliness', and it is ours to realize them *in experience*. All true blessings lie in the pathway of practical godliness.

**16. Attained]** This verb, in the Greek classics, usually means 'to be beforehand with', 'to anticipate', 'to arrive first'. It is found with that meaning in 1 Thes. iv. 15. The only other occurrences of the word are in Matt. xii. 28; Luke xi. 20; Rom. ix. 31; 2 Cor. x. 14; 1 Thes. ii. 16.

Something of its original meaning of 'rapid arrival' is probably present in this verse, and the tense (Aorist) lends force to this idea. It seems to suggest that the arrival at a given point has been made only after earnest and vigorous effort. The sense, therefore, is 'Let us walk according to that (experience) at which we have already arrived with the help of honest purpose and earnest conviction'.

**By that same (rule) let us walk]** The simplest translation seems to be 'Let us walk according to that which we have reached (already)'. Otherwise, some noun such as 'rule' must be supplied, as is done in the text.

Lightfoot understands it of 'the rule of faith as opposed to works', regarding the passage as a sort of last warning against the Pharisaic party referred to in v. 2.

Moule refers it to the Gospel principles of faith and love and holiness, understanding the exhortation to be 'to take care of Christian consistency in detail'.

Others prefer to apply it to 'the rule of moral progress', supposing it to be a further emphasizing of the teaching of vv. 12-14.

**18** which so walk even as ye have us for an ensample. For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even

On the whole, the main thought intended seems to be, 'You have reached a certain point in the path of holiness and onward progress. Go on stepping out in the same pathway. Only, if possible, and it is possible, increase your pace'.

**Walk]** This verb, which occurs only in four other passages, means 'to advance in a line or row', like the waves of the sea or the soldiers of an army. It denotes, therefore, 'ordered walking along a prescribed line of advance', and so may well be rendered 'step forward'. It is interesting to collate the texts in which it is used in the New Testament.

Stepping forward along (a) the line of the law. Acts xxi. 24. (b) the path of faith. Rom. iv. 12. (c) the line of the Spirit's guidance. Gal. v. 25. (d) the line of spiritual religion. Gal. vi. 16. (e) the line of progress in holiness. (here).

**17. Brethren]** See note on v. 13. The repetition here is striking, and marks the introduction of specially solemn words.

**Be ye imitators together of me]** Literally, 'Become joint-imitators of me'; i.e., 'unite with each other in imitating me', as several painters may sit down together, each with his own canvas, to copy the same picture; or as a number of scholars may vie with each other in seeking to follow the example of the same noble master. The word suggests that their unity and mutual love will be promoted as they thus turn their energies to one and the same laudable object. This is one of the striking 'fellowship-compounds' with which this Epistle abounds (Introd. VI). It is peculiar to this one passage.

It is far from unusual for St. Paul to invite Christian converts to 'imitate' himself (see iv. 9; 1 Cor. iv. 16; xi. 1; 1 Thes. i. 6; 2 Thes. iii. 7-9; etc.). And who will accuse him of egotism in so doing? All the previous context breathes the deepest humility. Such exhortations do but show his confidence in the truth of his message and serve to evince the sincerity of his purpose to live out, by God's help, that message in daily life. Only a true and earnest minister would dare to challenge his people to walk as he walked.

Is not one of the great needs of the Indian Church to-day a regular supply of sanctified ministers and teachers whose life, if not their lips, will be constantly saying to their flock, 'Become ye imitators of me'?

**Mark ye them which walk]** The word 'mark' is the same which we noticed before in ii. 4. It often means 'mark, so as to avoid' (e.g., Rom. xvi. 17). But here it implies 'mark, so as to follow'. There were

weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ :

those among them, doubtless, who exemplified the Apostle's teaching in their conduct.

**Walk]** This is not the same word as the one used in v. 16, but the ordinary one for denoting the action of walking, both literally and metaphorically. It speaks of active conduct and is far removed from ease and idleness. It was the walking rather than the talking of these Christians which was to be marked for imitation.

**Us]** He doubtless includes under this head such well-known teachers as Timothy, Silas, Epaphroditus and others.

The sense of the passage, of course, is 'Observe and follow those whose conduct agrees with ours who are your approved teachers in the Gospel'.

**Example]** Or 'model'. For some interesting occurrences of the same word, study 1 Thes. i. 7 ; 2 Thes. iii. 9 ; 1 Tim. iv. 12 ; Tit. ii. 7 ; 1 Pet. v. 3.

India, of all lands, needs concrete 'examples' of the truth and power of the Gospel in the lives of holy ministers and a godly laity. Creed and practice must agree.

**18. For many]** There is a tone of great sadness about these words. It is practically certain that he alludes to Antinomian reactionists. We know that there were such in Rome itself (Rom. vi. 1 ; xvi. 17, 18). There have been men of this type at every period of Church history.

The party referred to may have contained those who distorted the Gospel of grace, with its great doctrine of Justification by Faith, so completely that they made it a cloak for laxity of living. There may have been some, on the other hand, who, though sticklers for the law and Judaists of an extreme type, yet lived lives of open wickedness ; for a bigoted adherence to a religion of externalism and a life of utter worldliness and even immorality often go together. Again, there may have been others who held a sort of incipient Gnosticism (though that system, as such, was not fully developed till a somewhat later date), and who, regarding matter as essentially evil, thought the control of the body absolutely needless, while they cultivated a knowledge of what they claimed to be the 'esoteric doctrines' of the Christian economy. Whatever special form it may have taken, the evil in question is clearly recognizable. The word 'many' shows that the party alluded to was one of considerable dimensions.

19 whose end is perdition, whose god is the belly, and *whose*

**Walk]** This, of course, is the same word as in the previous verse, and not the 'ordered walk' referred to in v. 16. It is in the present tense, 'are walking'.

**I told you often]** The verb is in the imperfect tense, 'I used to tell you frequently, when I was with you'.

**And now tell you]** Better, 'But now tell you', for things had gone from bad to worse since his former communications on the subject.

**Even weeping]** St. Paul's 'weeping' is not confined to this one passage (see Acts xx. 19, 31; 2 Cor. ii. 4). He was both a strong and a tender hearted man. His intense realization of the danger of the unconverted and the miserable state of inconsistent Christians opened the floodgates of his soul. The word used implies an outward, almost passionate, manifestation of grief in loud weeping.

**The enemies of the cross of Christ]** The definite article here gives them a sad pre-eminence. They were *par excellence*, and beyond all others, 'the enemies'.

This expression may bear two meanings:

- (a) 'Foes of the propitiation of the Lord's death'; for, if a Christian leads an unholy life, he contradicts, *ipso facto*, the redemptive work of Him who died to 'save His people from their sins'. And this contradiction is the more complete that it comes from professed believers.
- (b) 'Foes of that life of self-denial and reproach for Christ's sake of which the cross is the approved and fitting symbol'. (See note on v. 10 suffering). Men who profess to shoulder the cross of shame and yet live lives of self-indulgence and worldliness are greater enemies to the truth than avowed infidels.

Both these interpretations would hold good in the case of the Antinomians who were practical deniers of the atonement and also of that unworldly life which it involves.

It would also be possible to interpret the words of doctrinal opposition to the 'preaching of the cross', and then the Pharisaic party would be the one grieved over. But this is not so probable, in the light of the context.

Anyhow, it is a truly awful title to have to give to any so-called Christians, 'the enemies of the cross of Christ', and we must see to it lest, by inconsistency of life, we earn it for ourselves.



<sup>10</sup> Or, *common-wealth*.

glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.  
For our <sup>10</sup> citizenship is in heaven; from whence **20**

The New Testament offers no palliation, under the excuse of human infirmity, for Christians who lie, or quarrel, or cheat in business, or bear false witness, or defraud their neighbour of his property, or transgress the sanctity of the Lord's Day, or yield to drunkenness and unchastity.

It does offer complete deliverance from these and all other forms of sin. But for those who, while professing to accept the redemption wrought by Christ, wilfully continue to ignore its meaning and deny its power by deeds of evil, it has one name, and only one; they are 'the enemies of the cross of Christ'.

**19. Whose end is perdition]** He has already used this terrible word 'perdition' in i. 28, which see. It implies 'ruin of the whole being, final and hopeless'. For other notices of the 'end' of the ungodly, see Rom. vi. 21; 2 Cor. xi. 15; Heb. vi. 8; 1 Pet. iv. 17.

**Whose god is the belly]** Cf. Rom. xvi. 18. The word 'belly', while calling special attention to the sins of gluttony and drunkenness, is often a synonym for sensual appetites in general. It indicates here a life of carnality, in every sense of the word.

It may be noticed, too, that teachers of the antinomian type were wont to vaunt their liberty in matters relating to 'meat and drink', and several times incurred the Apostle's censure (Rom. xiv. 17; 1 Cor. vi. 13; viii. 8).

The persons St. Paul has in view may have claimed an intimate acquaintance with God and boasted a knowledge of spiritual things, but in practice, their god was the belly and they were slaves of the flesh.

**Whose glory is in their shame]** They laid claims to a special 'glory' of their own, namely, to think more philosophically and to have clearer, fuller views of truth than others. They affected to possess, also, a larger degree of liberty. But, truly considered, their glorious system was really fearful degradation. It is a poor sort of 'glory' for a man to pose as a philosopher, and yet live a sensual life! Yet, alas! how many philosophers of this sort have arisen in India.

The word 'glory' occurs again in this Epistle in i. 11; ii. 11; iii. 21; iv. 19, 20. How different is the 'degradation glory' of this verse from the 'heavenly glory' of iii. 21; iv. 19!

**Who mind earthly things]** Better, '(Men) who (are) minding earthly things'. The word 'mind' is the same which occurs constantly in

also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ :

this Epistle (Introd. VI ; see notes on i. 7 ; ii. 2). Their thoughts and interests and affections were continually set on mundane things. While they claimed to live in a super-corporeal world, and to be acquainted with heavenly mysteries, they were really 'of the earth, earthy'. Contrast Col. iii. 2.

This attitude of mind of theirs was poles asunder from the 'mind' of ii. 5. For the adjective 'earthly', see note on ii. 10, where the same word is used.

**20. For our]** The word 'our' is most emphatic in the Greek. The connexion with what goes before is easily traced, '*They* live an earthly, grovelling life. Not so *we*. For *our* metropolis is in heaven, and our aims and interests are centred there'. In these words, the Apostle earnestly dissociates himself and his followers from those whose ungodliness he is deploring.

**Citizenship]** See note on i. 27, where the cognate verb is found. The noun under consideration occurs nowhere else in the New Testament.

It may mean either, or both, of two things :

(a) 'Our State, or city-home', the Commonwealth, with its metropolitan centre, to which as citizens, we belong. Moule suggests, 'seat of citizenship'. It speaks to us of a fatherland to which we are attached. Our names are on its registers. We are free of its privileges. We are also subject to its laws. It is ours to live on earth as those who are representatives of this heavenly State and who are expecting soon to see our city-home. This view of the word regards it as indicating a definite locality, as well as the organized State which is there, so to speak, domiciled.

(b) 'Our citizen functions', or 'civic status', including both the privileges and active duties which, by virtue of our connexion with so glorious a commonwealth, it is ours to realize and fulfil.

In the one case, our homeland with its ordered splendours is in view ; in the other, our status and duties as subjects of its rule and sharers of its glory. Both these interpretations are tenable, and both are applicable to the position of the Christian. Conybeare and Howson understand the word to mean 'the tenor of life', and render, 'For my life abides in heaven', but this idea, though included, seems inadequate.

**Is]** The same word as the one noticed in ii. 6, implying 'former existence'. We may paraphrase 'Our city-home is no dream of the

who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it **21**

future. It is already in existence. It subsists in heaven now, an antecedent and abiding fact'.

**In heaven]** As contrasted with the 'earthly things' of v. 19.

Moule paraphrases, 'In that heavenly country where the Lord is, and for which He is training us'.

Several of the early Fathers dwell on the thought of the heavenly city (or State), and St. Augustine, in particular, has elaborated it in his famous treatise '*On the City of God*'. To Christians in all times the thought has been a stimulus and an inspiration. For its practical bearing on the daily life see Col. iii. 1-17.

**From whence]** Thus rendered by many authorities, who claim that the expression had become in usage a mere adverb corresponding to our 'whence'. But this claim has been reasonably questioned.

Literally, it should be rendered 'out of which', the antecedent to the relative pronoun to be determined and supplied. Some refer it to the noun 'heaven', and, as the latter is plural in the Greek, regard it as an example of a singular pronoun relating to a plural noun; but this is open to objection. The simplest solution of the difficulty seems to be to regard the 'which' as referring back to the antecedent 'citizenship' (or city-home). This would give an excellent and satisfactory meaning. 'We wait for a Saviour to issue forth from that heavenly homeland to take us to Himself'.

**We wait]** The force of the verb implies 'eager, expectant waiting', and it is in the present tense. Translate, 'We are eagerly waiting for, every day and hour'. It is instructive to collate and study the occurrences of the word in the New Testament.

Eagerly awaiting (*a*) the revealing of the sons of God, Rom. viii. 19; (*b*) the redemption of our body, Rom. viii. 23; (*c*) that which we see not, Rom. viii. 25; (*d*) the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. i. 7; (*e*) the hope of (final) righteousness, Gal. v. 5; (*f*) a Saviour from heaven, Phil. iii. 20; (*g*) Christ's second appearing, unto salvation, Heb. ix. 28.

Thus, as used of man's attitude, it is entirely and exclusively a Second Advent verb, and is bound up indissolubly with the 'blessed hope' of the Christian believer.

In the only other passage in which it is found in the New Testament, it is employed to express God's eager waiting 'in the days of Noah', when His wonderful longsuffering yearned over the unwilling souls of rebellious men (1 Pet. iii. 20).

may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the

The usage of the word, therefore, shows that

a. On God's side, it signifies His earnest longing for the conversion of men. b. On man's side, it denotes our eager waiting for the return of Christ.

**A Saviour]** One who, in His character and work, is essentially 'a Saviour', and who is coming to perfect and consummate the work of salvation by delivering His people from the very presence of sin, as He has already freed them from its guilt and power. 'The redemption of our body' will be the climax and completion of that work of salvation which Christ accomplished by His death and resurrection. For this meaning of the word as denoting full and final salvation, see Rom. xiii. 11; Phil. i. 19, 28 (notes); 1 Thes. v. 8, 9; 2 Tim. ii. 10; Tit. ii. 13; Heb. ii. 10; ix. 28; 1 Pet. i. 5.

We might have expected 'from whence we wait for a King', or 'a Judge'; but, no! it is 'a Saviour', for the true Christian's hope is perfect deliverance from the last lingering taint of sin, when He shall come.

**The Lord Jesus Christ]** Cf. a similar title in v. 8. Here the use of the full, grand title is most appropriate.

The coming One is our 'Lord' the glorified and exalted Sovereign (ii. 9-11), whose is the kingdom and the power and the glory; the Master, too, whose we are and whom we serve.

He is 'Jesus', who died for us and whose blood-shedding is the ground of all our confidence; aye! and He, too, whose very name necessitates His return to consummate the work of His salvation.

And He is 'Christ', the anointed mediator of the New Covenant, whose it is, by virtue of His messianic office, to save and rule and reign; in whom is to be satisfied, beyond all manner of mistake or doubt, every claim of still unfulfilled prophecy.

**21. Who shall fashion anew]** Better 'Who shall change the (fleeting) fashion of'. The verb (for it is all one word in the Greek) is akin to the noun 'fashion' ( $\sigma\chi\eta\mu\alpha$ ) in ii. 8, and is found again only in 1 Cor. iv. 6; 2 Cor. xi. 13, 14, 15.

It suggests to us, surely, that our present body is not the permanent type, but only a temporary and transient guise or fashion. Here is a thought of hope and comfort for those to whom, by reason of sickness or infirmity, the 'flesh' appears a heavy burden.

At the same time there is an underlying thought that the essentials of the glorified body are already there, and that it is only the accidents, so to speak, of our present body which need to be changed.

working whereby he is able even to subject all things

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer is a pledge and earnest of the coming change (Rom. viii. 11).

**The body of our humiliation]** Our present body has been 'humbled' by the deep disgrace of the fall. Satan has possessed it. Sin has tainted it. In the light of this fact, the redemption of our body is at once a great necessity and a glorious hope. It shall be so transfigured, at the coming of the Lord that no vestige of sin or sin's disgrace shall remain.

The expression reminds us, too, of the 'humiliation' which arises from the fact of the passions and weaknesses and limitations which beset our mortal flesh. With these limitations in view, and the restrictions which they impose on the full, free action of man's spirit, Tennyson has styled the body,

This poor, rib-grated dungeon of the holy human ghost.

And poets and philosophers in every land have sung and sighed about its burdens and infirmities; not least of all in India. The doctrine, therefore, of the coming transformation of the body, and its deliverance from the limitations which now confine it, as well as from the taint of sin, is one of the grandest and most inspiring in the whole of Revelation. It differs *in toto* from the Hindu belief in pantheistic metempsychosis with its weary round of births and renewed embodiments, ending in the final disappearance of all bodies as unreal and illusionary. And it immeasurably transcends the Musalman notion of a sensual Paradise.

Yet, while we realize to the full the deep 'humiliation' of the body, we must thankfully appreciate the other truth, clearly revealed in the word of God, that the body of the believer is already ransomed from the power of sin and is, here and now, 'the temple of the Holy Ghost' (Rom. viii. 10, 11; 1 Cor. iii. 16; vi. 19, 20). It is honoured by God, in spite of present limitations and infirmities, as His sanctuary, and the instrument for accomplishing His purposes in the world (Rom. vi. 13; xii. 1, 2). There is no support in this verse for the false doctrine of Pagan philosophers and Christian heretics that 'matter is essentially evil'. The redemption of Christ reaches to the whole man, body, soul and spirit. (1 Thes. v. 23). The word 'humiliation' is used elsewhere in Luke i. 48; Acts viii. 33; Jas. i. 10.

**That it may be conformed to]** The adjective thus translated (only one word in the original) is cognate to the noun 'form' (*μορφή*) found in ii. 6, and occurs again only in Rom. viii. 29, an interesting parallel. It speaks distinctly of a real and abiding 'form', as distinguished from the 'fleeting fashion' of our present frame. This thought is well expressed in one of Lightfoot's paraphrases, 'will change the fashion of the body of our humiliation, and fix it in the form of the body of His glory.'

unto himself.

It combines the idea of permanence as against transiency with that of essential attributes as against mere outward appearance. When Christ comes, we shall part with the temporary, the imperfect, the accidental, and shall obtain the abiding, the perfect, the essential 'form'.

Truly the Christian's golden age is in the future! His joy and satisfaction are great now; they will be infinitely greater then.

**The body of His glory]** That is our type, the body which Christ bears in His glorified state. This expression 'the body of His glory' should be pondered, and weighed, word for word, against the contrasted phrase 'the body of our humiliation'.

Our humiliation 'His glory', how vast the gulf between the two! But grace has bridged it, and we are going to cross it.

A careful study of the history of our Saviour's resurrection will throw some light on the chief characteristics of 'the body of His glory'. We shall recall how the risen Lord's resurrection body was unhindered in its passage by closed doors and unconfined by the law of gravitation. We shall remember how it passed the ken even of His dearest friends, while yet it was demonstrably identical, as to essentials, with the body which was nailed upon the cross. And our 'resurrection body' is to be conformed to His. 1 Cor. xv. 35-53, also, should be re-studied in this connexion.

**According to the working whereby He is able]** Bengel well exclaims here, 'the work of the omnipotent Lord.'

**Working]** This noun adopted in English as 'energy' means 'active operation'. It is used in the New Testament only by St. Paul, and is found in Eph. i. 19; iii. 7; iv. 16; Col. i. 29; ii. 12; 2 Thes. ii. 9, 11; a set of verses which will well repay study. Of these, Eph. i. 19; iii. 7; Col. i. 29 contain the full expression of the text 'according to the working'. It is interesting to observe that it is chiefly in his prison letters that the Apostle dwells upon the thought.

The preposition 'according to' points to the standard and law and measure of the 'working'. When we ask, in bewildered wonder, what force can transfigure 'the body of our humiliation' into exact conformity with 'the body of His glory', St. Paul points in reply to the standard and measure of God's 'effectual working'. 'According to the working of His being able (so a literal translation runs) to subject all things unto Himself'. In ways and means corresponding to such omnipotence, He can do it, and He will.

Well does the same Apostle bid us to have 'faith in the working of God' (Col. ii. 12). The operation of His ability is nothing less than the operation of unlimited omnipotence.

**4.** Wherefore, my brethren beloved and longed for, my joy **1** and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my beloved.

**Even to subject]** Cf. 1. Cor. xv. 25, 27, 28; Eph. i. 22; Heb. ii. 8. In many passages the Father is spoken of as the 'subjector', but, since Christ is the mediator of this present dispensation (Col. i. 16-20), and the Father works through Him and with Him, there is no real contradiction of terms. Our thoughts, on reading this verse, naturally go back to ii. 10, 11. The time will come when the Lamb of God shall be manifested in His glorious might, subduing, subjecting, ruling over all things.

**All things]** The expression is as full and clear in the Greek as it can be, having the definite article prefixed and so carrying the force 'all things that are'. Exactly the same phrase occurs in Rom. viii. 32; xi. 36; 1 Cor. viii. 6; xi. 12; xii. 6; xv. 27, 28; 2 Cor. v. 18; Eph. i. 10, 11, 23; iii. 9; iv. 10; etc.

Nothing is removed from the scope of His subduing power, either in our redeemed body or in the universe around. His is an omnipotent power; and His shall be a complete victory.

**Unto Himself]** That is, 'unto Christ'. Thus we have in prospect the time when all His enemies shall have been made His footstool (Heb. x. 12, 13), and He, as mediator of this dispensation of grace, shall have perfectly consummated His redemptive work, and shall be acknowledged the alone conqueror and King (1 Cor. xv. 25-28). Then shall He be 'glorified in His saints and marvelled at in all them that believed' (2 Thes. i. 10), for in His new creation, the Church of the ransomed and sanctified and glorified, His wisdom, grace and power will be triumphantly displayed to view. If we look at the immeasurable measure of His ability to work effectually, as we find it here set forth, unbelief will vanish, and hope and joy be stimulated.

This hope of the Lord's appearing is the hope of His Church. Only as we apprehend it, live in the light of the glory of it, and eagerly await the coming Christ, shall we be strengthened and spurred in running the race which it is the object of this chapter to set before us.

Such a glow of hope is absent from all the pagan religions of the world. Let the Indian Church, then, be a Church which earnestly expects the return of Him who is able to, and who will, 'subject all things unto Himself.'

## CHAPTER IV.

vv. 1-9. EXHORTATIONS TO UNITY, JOY, FORBEARANCE, PRAYER.

**1. Wherefore]** See note on ii. 12, where the same word occurs, rendered 'so then'. The connexion with the foregoing verses is obvious,

2 I exhort Euodia, and I exhort Syntyche, to be of the

‘ With such a glorious hope in view, the coming of the Saviour to transfigure and translate you, stand fast in Christ and obey the practical injunctions which will now be set before you ’.

A belief in, and an earnest expectation of, the Second Advent of Christ ought to prove the most powerful of incentives to a life of holiness (Rom. xiii. 11-14 ; 1 Cor. xv. 50-58 ; Col. iii. 4-17 ; Tit. ii. 11-14 ; 1 Pet. i. 13-17 ; 1 John. iii. 2, 3).

**My brethren]** Cf. notes on iii. 13, 17. Here, as there, it stands on the threshold of important admonitions. It follows again in iv. 8, with a like purpose.

**Beloved]** ii. 12 (note). Its double occurrence in this verse is remarkable. The Apostle would bathe his exhortations in tenderness. This missionary was a man of strong affection.

That was a true word which a convert from Hinduism said to an English clergyman, ‘ India wants love. You can do anything you like with the people of this land if you only love them and show them that you do.’

**Longed for]** An adjective peculiar to this one verse in the New Testament, though the corresponding verb has been already used in this Epistle (i. 8, see note ; ii. 26), and cognate nouns are found in Rom. xv. 23 ; 2 Cor. vii. 7, 11.

His Philippian friends, absent in the flesh, were sorely missed, and longed for’ with an intense, personal, homesick longing. The accumulation of terms of affection in this verse is striking.

**My joy and crown]** A very similar combination of words is found in 1 Thes. ii. 19, and in a like connexion, namely, the second coming of our Lord.

His ‘ joy ’, both now, whilst he is still running the course of earthly ministry (1 Thes. iii. 9 ; cf. i. 4), and hereafter, when the course is finished and he sees the beloved converts sanctified and glorified, at the day of Christ, in the presence of the King (ii. 16 ; 1 Thes. ii. 19, 20 ; 2 Cor. i. 14).

His ‘ crown,’ that is, the victor’s chaplet given to the faithful minister (1 Pet. v. 4), and the festive wreath which he shall one day wear at the ‘ marriage supper of the Lamb ’ (Rev. xix. 9). For the crown of pine leaves was both a prize to successful athletes and an ornament of joy for festive occasions. The Apostle regards those whom he has won for Christ as being, at the same time, his gladness and his reward. We too, if we would wear the chaplet then, must win souls now. And there is plenty of scope for soul-winning in India,

No jewel mines for Christ like heathendom. (C. A. Fox.)



same mind in the Lord. Yea, I beseech thee also, true **3**

**So]** That is, 'As having such a certain aim (iii. 14, 15), and such a blessed hope (iii. 20, 21): as befits those who are citizens of heaven'.

**Stand fast]** See note on i. 27. Those who know what lies before them and have a sure hope of a glorious to-morrow may well hold firm to their principles and go steadily forward on their way (cf. 1 Cor. xv. 58).

**In the Lord]** Refer to note on ii. 19, and cf. Eph. vi. 10. It is as though he said 'In remembrance and joyous experience of your vital union with Him; in "the practice of the presence of Christ"; in Him as your fortress: stand fast; keep firm'.

**2. I exhort]** We may also render 'beseech' (see, e.g., 1 Cor. i. 10; 2 Cor. xii. 8), or 'intreat' (2 Cor. v. 20; vi. 1; ix. 5). A tone of appeal seems best to suit the context.

Notice that the verb is repeated. He addresses a personal appeal to each individual concerned. So to speak, he takes one by his right hand, and the other by his left, in order to draw them together in Christian reconciliation. Here is a good example of the best way for settling personal disputes among Christians. Speak to each of them separately and lovingly; then bring them together in peace.

**Euodia . . . Syntyche]** Both these feminine names are found in old inscriptions, as having been current among the Greeks.

Our knowledge of these two Christian ladies is confined to this one passage of Scripture. It is clear that they must have been persons of some position and standing in the Philippian Church; and the conjecture has been hazarded that they were deaconesses (like Phœbe, Rom. xvi. 1). At least they had given active assistance to the Apostle in evangelistic work when he laboured in their vicinity (v. 3).

They appear, in spite of their sex, to have been ringleaders in those disputes which it was one of the main objects of this Epistle to compose. Whether on some question of personal precedence, or owing to some family dispute, or in connexion with Christian work or doctrine, they were at variance with each other; and their quarrel involved serious division in the Church.

It is remarkable to find, at that period of history, women so prominent in the congregation, but it is at least a striking analogy that members of their sex are seen to have played a not unimportant part in the evangelization of Macedonia (Acts xvi. 13-18, 40; xvii. 4, 12).

Bishop Lightfoot adduces evidence from extant Greek inscriptions to show that women in Macedonia exercised an influence much above the common, and this fact tallies with what we read of them in New Testament history.

yoke-fellow, help these women, for they laboured with me

How many disputes in our congregations are originated by women, the wives of ministers or prominent laymen! Personal rivalries and contentions for precedence are by no means confined to past history.

Even in Christian work, too, differences of opinion about methods are sometimes allowed to divide missions and to form parties. The 'mind' of Christ (ii. 5) is the only antidote to such poison.

**To be of the same mind]** Literally, 'To mind the same thing'. The phrase is identical with that in ii. 2 (see note there). It is one more occurrence of an important key-word (Introd. VI). If the thoughts and desires are centred on a common object, differences will cease.

**In the Lord]** The seventh occurrence of this phrase in the Epistle (i. 14 ; ii. 19, 24, 29 ; iii. 1 ; iv. 1). It will meet us yet again in two later verses (vv. 4, 10). See note on ii. 19.

It is not without a special object that the Apostle rings the chimes again and again on these words 'In the Lord', 'In the Lord', 'In the Lord'. In Him, and in His presence, there is no room for bickerings.

If we remember that the word rendered 'Lord' (*κύριος*) also signifies 'Master', there is peculiar force in the use of it in connexion with the Philippian disputants. 'Mind the same thing in the Lord, who is your common Master, and whose bondservants ought not to be wrangling, but busy about their Master's work'. This meaning seems to be supported by the word which almost immediately follows—yoke-fellow.

**3. Yea]** St. Paul employs this word again in Acts xxii. 27 ; Rom. iii. 29 ; 2 Cor. i. 17, 18, 19, 20 ; Philem. 20. In the last of these references it introduces, as here, an affectionate appeal.

**I beseech]** Quite a different word from the one we noticed in v. 2. It means, classically, to 'interrogate' or 'inquire', but came to be employed, later, in the sense of 'to ask', which is its meaning here. It denotes, properly, a request made to an equal, as against a petition addressed to a superior.

In R. V. it is rendered thirty-nine times by 'ask'; eleven times by 'beseech'; nine times by 'pray'; and once by 'desire'. Though very common in the Gospels it is rare in the Epistles, and St. Paul only uses it in addressing Macedonian Christians. He asks them,

(a) To promote Christian unity. (here).

(b) To walk more and more holily. 1 Thes. iv. 1

(c) To give due respect to their ministers. 1 Thes. v. 12.

(d) To beware of unbalanced doctrine. 2 Thes. ii. 1.

in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow-

**True]** The corresponding adverb occurs in ii. 20 (truly); see note there. The sense is 'genuine'.

**Yoke-fellow]** Another 'fellowship compound' (Introd. VI), peculiar to this one verse.

We cannot determine with certainty the person thus addressed. Various conjectures have been hazarded.

- (a) That the word is really a proper name 'Syzygos', and that the Apostle writes to the individual who bears it as follows, 'thou who art truly called "Syzygos", my yoke-fellow in deed as well as name'. For this opinion, though very ancient and mentioned by Chrysostom, there is no support either in the sacred history or in the Greek inscriptions.
- (b) That St. Paul is addressing his own wife, to whom the word 'yoke-fellow' would be peculiarly appropriate. This interpretation was in vogue as far back as Clement of Alexandria (second century A.D.), but 1 Cor. vii. 8 would seem to show that St. Paul was unmarried or, more probably, a widower. The adjective 'true' also is in the masculine, not the feminine gender.
- (c) That Lydia is intended by the word (Acts xvi. 15, 40), as being a real fellow-helper in the Lord's work at Philippi. But here again the gender of the adjective forbids.
- (d) That some leading minister or Church-officer is in view. Barnabas, Luke, Silas, Timothy, and the chief-presbyter or bishop of Philippi, have all been suggested as meeting the case.
- (e) That Epaphroditus himself, the bearer of the Epistle, is addressed in writing here, in addition to the oral instructions which he may have received, so as to give him special credentials in black and white. This is Bishop Lightfoot's hypothesis and has much to commend it.

But, having said all, we cannot arrive at any degree of certainty. Whoever the person may have been, the word employed is suggestive and instructive. To 'bear Christ's yoke together' is to enjoy unity indeed (Matt. xi. 29, 30). It means that they who carry it are bondslaves of the same Master, subject to the one control, dominated by the same sovereign will.

**Help these women]** Literally 'Help them' (the 'them' being in the feminine gender). The reference is clearly to Euodia and Syntyche.

**Help]** Though this verb occurs in other senses in the New Testament, this is the only passage in which it means to assist. It gives the idea of 'taking part with anyone, so as to help them'.

workers, whose names are in the book of life.

The 'help' in question may have been, as Moule suggests, that of a personal conference and exhortation, with prayer, so as to bring about their reconciliation.

**For they laboured with me]** Literally 'Who are such as strove along with me'. They belonged, that is, to the class of the Apostle's fellow-workers. While he deplores their quarrel, he cannot forget their former brave and ready help. 'I cannot forget how zealously they seconded my efforts on behalf of the Gospel'. (Lightfoot).

**Laboured with me]** This is hardly correct. Render 'strove along with me', or 'wrestled alongside me'. It is the same verb that occurred in i. 27 (see note there).

The word suggests that they had been fellow-soldiers of St. Paul in the Lord's battles, and had striven shoulder to shoulder with him against the common foe. It means more, surely, than giving relief to the Christian poor or gently instructing their female neighbours. It is a military and athletic word, and there is a ring of real contest about it. We learn here that women have their part to play in the evangelization of the world and in bravely fighting the battles of the Lord. India, with its teeming female population, calls loudly for Christian women who will break the trammels of 'custom' and courageously carry the Gospel to their Hindu and Muhammadan sisters. When souls are perishing, we must do and dare something to help them, even if we seem to go against custom in so acting.

**In the Gospel]** Cf. Rom. i. 9; 1 Cor. ix. 18; 2 Cor. x. 14; 1 Thes. iii. 2; where also this phrase occurs.

A comparison of these passages will show that the sense of the word is 'in the cause or service of the Gospel'. We may also refer back to the somewhat similar expressions in the first chapter (i. 5, 7, 12).

**With Clement also]** This clause may be taken in two ways.

- (a) It may be directly connected with the words 'for they strove along with me', when the sense will be 'they strove alongside me, as also did Clement and the rest of my fellow-workers at Philippi'.
- (b) It may be linked on to the verb 'help', when the meaning will be 'help them, and, in the work of reconciling them, associate with thyself Clement and the rest'.

Lightfoot and Moule prefer the latter of these interpretations, while Bengel and others adopt the former.

Both are possible, so far as the grammar is concerned; but, on the whole, the former seems preferable, as it is the simpler and more natural

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Farewell*.

<sup>1</sup> Rejoice in the Lord alway: again I will say **4**

<sup>2</sup> Or, *gentleness*.

<sup>1</sup> Rejoice. Let your <sup>2</sup> forbearance be known unto **5**

construction. The Apostle, in looking back to the old days of conflict on behalf of the Gospel, makes loving mention of some who showed special valour in the cause of Christ, the mention being suggested by circumstances connected with the two ladies whose names are here grouped with those of Clement and the rest.

**Clement]** He has been identified by Origen, Eusebius, and others with Clement, Bishop of Rome, whose famous Epistle to the Corinthians was, however, probably not written till A.D. 90-95. There are strong objections, on various grounds, to such an identification. Neither their circumstances nor their dates tally, and the hypothesis involves many improbabilities. Moreover, the name Clement was far from being an uncommon one at that period.

**Fellow-workers]** See note on ii. 25, in which the word occurs.

Thus St. Paul looks back to a time of partnership both in war and work with his friends at Philippi. It is noticeable that we have three grand fellowship ideas brought together in this one verse.

(a) Under the yoke of Christ together (yoke-fellow).

(b) In the battles of Christ together (strove along with me).

(c) At the work of Christ together (fellow-workers).

A three-fold cord of unity, this, which is not easily to be broken.

**Whose names are]** They are not written in this Epistle, but they are written in 'the book of life'. Many names unknown in the Church's scroll of fame are well known in heaven. Mark the certainty with which the Apostle speaks about the spiritual condition of these, his friends.

**The book of life]** The same expression occurs again in Rev. iii. 5; xx. 15; and a practically identical one in Rev. xiii. 8; xvii. 8; xx. 12; xxi. 27. Cf. Dan. xii. 1; Luke x. 20; Heb. xii. 23.

Here then is the heavenly register in which the names of all true citizens are written and recorded. Enrolled in those glorious annals, they have a status and dignity nobler far than any earthly rank can give them. Braced up by this glad certainty, they can go forward without misgivings in their Master's work and war.

**4. Rejoice in the Lord]** See notes on iii. 1. This 'joy in the Lord' is the antidote to error both in doctrine and practice.

**Alway]** Cf. i. 4, note.

**Again I will say, Rejoice]** He repeats the message in the tautology of earnestness, out of strong desire for their welfare.

6 all men. The Lord is at hand. In nothing be anxious; but

He has already said 'Rejoice' in iii. 1, in view of counteracting the doctrinal errors which he exposes in that chapter. Now 'again' he will say 'Rejoice', as he presses home the duties of self-repression and believing prayer.

**5. Forbearance]** The word denotes, in the Greek, a combination of equity with gentleness. It is that spirit of kindly moderation which will not assert its *legal rights* lest, in so doing, it should be betrayed into committing moral wrong (see Trench's *New Testament Synonyms*). Moule suggests the rendering 'yieldingness'.

Perhaps it may be illustrated by Christ's action in the case of the half-shekel demanded from Him as the temple tax (Matt. xvii. 24-27). Had He insisted on His strict rights, He would have resisted the claim; but, lest He should cause others to stumble, He waived His rights and paid it. His whole life is full of instances of such a spirit of fair gentleness, and hence the appeal based upon it in 2 Cor. x. 1.

This spirit is the very antithesis of selfishness. 'It means, in effect, considerateness, the attitude of thought and will which in remembrance of others forgets self, and willingly yields up the purely personal claims of self.' (Moule).

The noun itself is found again in Acts xxiv. 4; 2 Cor. x. 1; and the cognate adjective in 1 Tim. iii. 3; Tit. iii. 2; Jas. iii. 17; 1 Pet. ii. 18.

If this spirit were more prevalent among us in this country, there would be much less litigation and fewer Panchâyats. The quarrels, too, which divide so many congregations and are the source of so much weakness would cease. Let us learn to abjure insistence on our own 'rights', as we regard them, for the higher 'rights' of Christ and of his Gospel.

**Be known to all men]** The nature of this character of 'forbearance' is such that 'it must needs embody itself in outward acts' (Trench). It will be known in the home, in the business, in the congregation. It will be seen in actual life, and evidenced in all our intercourse with others. Unselfishness is too uncommon to be hidden. It will appear to all men, whether they be good or evil.

**The Lord is at hand]** This expression may bear a double meaning:

- (a) 'The Lord is at hand', the returning Lord, coming back from heaven (iii. 20, 21) to glorify His people. Cf. Jas. v. 8. In the light of His coming, we are charged to practise moderation. This is no time for self-seeking. Let Him alone be served.

It has been pointed out by several that the phrase 'The Lord is at hand' is a sort of Second Advent watchword with St. Paul. Its Aramaic equivalent 'Maran Atha' is found in

in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let

1 Cor. xvi. 22 and it has been suggested that the Apostle wrote it there in Hebrew characters, as a sort of autograph to authenticate the Epistle. It seems clear, at least, that it was a formula familiar to the early Church.

Thus we are face to face again with the fact that an expectation of the return of Christ has a most practical and wholesome bearing on the life of the believer (see notes on iii. 21; iv. 1).

- (b) 'The Lord is at hand', the enabling Lord, here and now, in spiritual presence. Cf. Ps. cxix. 151, 'Thou art nigh, O Lord,' where the expression in the Greek of the LXX is practically identical with the one of this verse. This interpretation would urge the fact of that presence as affording a motive and a power for the exercise of moderation.

While both these interpretations are good and helpful, the former one seems far the more probable.

**6. In nothing]** Cf. note on i. 20. Literally, 'As to nothing'.

**Be anxious]** See note on the same verb in ii. 20 (care).

What is here prohibited is that 'anxious, harassing care' which arises from our want of faith in God and from unwillingness to cast our burden on the burden-bearer (Is. lv. 22; 1 Pet. v. 7). In the true life of faith, there is no room, as there is no need, for any such 'corroding care'.

How many Christians are 'anxious' and 'fret themselves' (Ps. xxxvii. 1, 7, 8) about a multitude of things, whose lives would be transformed and transfigured by simply acting upon the precept of this verse. Many a worker in India to day is kept back from usefulness in God's service by anxiety about his property, or his family, or the education of his children. And this anxiety is a fruitful source of debt.

Real faith and corroding care cannot go together; the presence of the one proves the absence of the other. Bengel has well expressed it, 'Refuse to care, and give yourself to prayer. Care and prayer are more mutually antagonistic than water and fire'.

**But in everything]** This phrase must be set over against the other.

'In nothing be anxious'. . . 'In everything let your requests be made known'. 'Everything' is an all-inclusive positive, which covers all the ground indicated by the all-inclusive negative word, 'nothing'.

The expression 'in everything' will well repay study in the New Testament. It will be found in the original, in the following passages, at least; 1 Cor. i. 5; 2 Cor. iv. 8; vi. 4; vii. 5, 11, 16; viii. 7; ix. 11; xi. 6, 9; Eph. v. 24; Phil. iv. 6, 12; 1 Thes. v. 18. A classification of these verses will show a wonderful range both of privilege and duty. God's provision is clearly universal in its scope.

7 your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of

**By prayer]** The definite article in the Greek gives the sense 'By your prayer and your supplication'.

This is the general word for 'prayer', considered as the 'offering up of the wishes and desires to God', and includes all kinds and parts of worship. It is restricted to sacred uses, being never employed of requests or petitions addressed to men.

**Supplication]** See note on i. 4. It occurs again thus, in conjunction with 'prayer', in Eph. vi. 18; 1 Tim. ii. 1; v. 5; and is contrasted with it as indicating a special petition for the supply of felt needs. Unlike the former word, it is not confined to sacred uses, but may be employed of supplications addressed to our fellow-men.

In 'prayer', the frame of mind is perhaps prominent; in 'supplication', the act of solicitation.

**With thanksgiving]** A reference to i. 3 will show how this teacher acted on his own teaching. The grateful acknowledgment of past mercies is an integral part of the Christian's devotions. No act of worship is complete without it, and every prayer is defective which lacks it (cf. Eph. v. 20; 1 Thes. v. 18; 1 Tim. ii. 1).

The noun 'thanksgiving' occurs fifteen times in the New Testament and, of these, no less than ten are found in St. Paul's writings. The corresponding verb is used thirty-eight times, and this Apostle is responsible for twenty-four of the references. He is thus, pre-eminently, the Apostle of thanksgiving, and his Epistles are radiant with eucharistic praise.

'Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they will be still praising Thee' (Ps. lxxxiv. 4), as ever fresh views of the Divine goodness burst upon their view and excite their glowing gratitude. Thanksgiving is the death of care. If there were more praising, there would be less doubting.

**Requests]** These are the several objects which together make up the 'supplication'. We present our 'requests' *seriatim*, one by one, to God, who considers nothing too small for His attention.

The word is found only in two other passages, the one denoting a request to God (1 Joh. v. 15); and the other a request to men (Luke xxiii. 24).

**Be made known]** We are to 'make known' our requests unto God though He knows them already; just as a child pours out its needs into a willing parent's ear. It is this very act of 'making known', so to speak, which constitutes the 'casting of our anxiety upon Him' (1 Pet. v. 7). And it is not merely, as some would suppose, that such



God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts

'acts of prayer' soothe our minds and so form a useful exercise; but, however mysterious the fact may seem, the 'requests' of the sincere believer are heard in heaven, and God receives and answers them.

For an illustration of the way in which 'prayer moves the hand which moves the world', let Hos. ii. 21, 22 be carefully studied. There we see God's loving hand, as it were, setting in motion wheel after wheel of the machinery of the universe in response to His people's cry; and we can trust the sovereign framer of eternal laws both to take care of His own laws and to fulfil His own promises. Let us not confuse our minds by endeavouring to grasp impenetrable mysteries, but let us pray.

**Unto God]** The force of the words in the original is 'to God-ward'. That is, we seek His help, with heart and face 'towards' Him. The definite article in the Greek, also, gives a special character to the Being thus addressed, 'towards our God', the One whom we know and trust.

The well-known prayer of Daniel the prophet (Dan. ix. 3-19) may furnish a good concrete example of this passage. We see the general feature of prayer in his setting his face unto the Lord and pouring forth his soul in worship, confession, and petition. Supplication is prominent in a clear expression of the need which he felt, and is seen in the earnest pathos of his language. Thanksgiving, too, is there, in a grateful acknowledgment of God's perfect character and of His mercies to His people in the past (vv. 4, 7, 9, 15). And definite requests are urged for pardon, favour, and speedy restoration (vv. 16-19).

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of prayer, and especially of private prayer, in the life of the Christian. Only as we live in the presence of God can we experience freedom from anxious care. And only as we come forth from the quiet calm of that presence to the business of daily life can we face the strain and stress of life with minds unruffled. Special stress must be laid on this in the development of the Christian Church in India. For some remarks on the same subject, see note on the words 'much more in my absence' (ii. 12).

**7. And]** That is, 'If you thus make your requests to God in real and confiding faith, then the peace of God shall be yours. But not otherwise'.

The conjunction reminds us that the enjoyment of this peace is consequent on the practice of believing prayer.

Our vessel is at rest only as it enters the quiet harbour, and it must refit there before it faces once more the troubled sea outside.

**The peace of God]** That is, the glad calm of soul which is produced in us by fellowship with God, being communicated to us by the Holy Spirit. It is the gift of God to the believer as he lives the life of faith.

and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

The expression of the text is unique ; it is found in no other passage of the New Testament. But a similar phrase 'the peace of Christ' occurs in Col. iii. 15. It is interesting to compare the two.

Here, 'the peace' of God is represented as a sentinel, guarding our hearts and thoughts.

There, 'the peace of Christ' is regarded as an umpire or arbitrator, awarding the prize to the pure motive and the right decision.

It should be noticed that this heavenly peace has nothing in common with the passive resignation of the Hindu or Muhammadan fatalist. Neither is it of like kind with the *Sánti*, or quietism of the Indian ascetic, a sort of stillness or equability of mind thought to be attainable by the subdual of the passions and meditation on the deity.

No! the peace in view here is the very impartation of His own nature by the living Christ to the soul which abides in Him, by the power of the almighty Spirit. See John xiv. 27, 'My peace give I unto you ; not as the world giveth give I unto you'. It is a peace as possible and as real in the busy mart as in the quiet jungle.

Moule's note should be quoted : 'The long and full previous context all leads up to this ; the view of our acceptance in and for Christ alone (iii. 3-9) ; the deepening knowledge of the living Lord and His power (10) ; the expectation, in the path of spiritual obedience, of a blessed future (11-21) ; watchful care over communion with Christ, and over a temper befitting the Gospel, and over the practice of prayer (iv. 1-6).'

**Which passeth all understanding]** Literally, 'The (peace) surpassing all mind'. That is, this matchless peace transcends all power of thought or conception ; our intelligence cannot gauge or grasp it (cf. Eph. iii. 19). It is supernatural, and so above and beyond the highest reach of our mental processes. 'Our reason recognizes that this peace exists, because God exists ; our articulate reasoning cannot overtake its experiences ; they are always above, below, beyond' (Moule).

Here then we are face to face with the supernatural in man's experience. Does not speculative philosophy, however reverent in tone, lose sight of the very simplest axioms of truth when it endeavours to apprehend and explain, in the language of human logic, those mysteries of the unseen world which, from their very nature, 'pass the ken of man' and can only be known at all by special revelation? In no land has religious speculation been more rife than here in India. Hindu sages and philosophers have thought deeply and subtly, and attempted to unravel the intricate secrets of being, both human and divine. The result is a series of *Sástras* and *Darsanas* in which their deductions have been reduced to systems, each of which has its devoted followers.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever 8

But is it surprising to find that their conclusions are disappointing and mutually conflicting; so that, while some are theistic, others are atheistic; and, while some recognize the existence of the human spirit as a fact, others see in it only a virtual image or reflection of the impersonal divine Spirit?

How much more reasonable is the position of this chapter which admits that God and His nature and His peace 'pass all understanding', while yet indicating a way by which they may be appropriated and enjoyed.

Bishop Lightfoot prefers to understand the expression as meaning 'surpassing every device or counsel of man'. The 'peace of God', according to this interpretation, brings a more complete satisfaction to the heart than any anxious planning or forethought or deliberation could do.

**Passes]** Another form of the same word as the one rendered 'excellency' in iii. 8.

**Shall guard]** The word means to 'keep watch or guard' like the garrison of a fort or the sentry of a camp. It has been pointed out that a striking paradox is involved in representing peace as a warrior-sentinel, but paradoxes are common in divine things and serve to fix attention on them. (Cf. Eph. vi. 15 for a similar paradox).

The word 'guard' occurs in three other passages. In 2 Cor. xi. 32 we have a historical illustration of guarding in the action of the governor of Damascus watching the city in order to take Paul. The other occurrences of the word may be here collated.

(a) The law guarding its prisoners. Gal. iii. 23.

(b) The peace of God guarding true believers. Phil. iv. 7.

(c) The power of God guarding waiting Christians. 1 Pet. i. 5.

In the last passage, however, it would be possible to regard God's power as the fortress rather than the sentry, 'Who in the power of God are guarded, etc.'. Where fair peace is sentinel, anxious care cannot enter.

**Your hearts]** The 'heart', in scriptural usage, is the seat alike of the will, the affections, and the reflective faculties. It is practically synonymous with 'the inner man'. See e.g., Matt. v. 8; ix. 4; xv. 8, 19; John xiv. 1; xvi. 6; Rom. ii. 29; viii. 27; x. 8; 1 Cor. ii. 9; iv. 5; xiv. 25; 2 Cor. iv. 6; Eph. i. 18; Col. iii. 15. The promise is, therefore, that the 'inner man', with its every desire and thought and feeling, shall be kept in perfect rest.

**And your thoughts]** The word carries the ideas of 'perception', 'thought', 'design'. It occurs elsewhere only in 2 Corinthians ii. 11; iii. 14; iv. 4; x. 5; xi. 3, which texts should be well studied. The

things are <sup>3</sup>honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, <sup>4</sup>Or, *gracious*. whatsoever things are <sup>1</sup>of good report; if there be

'thoughts' reside in and come forth from the 'heart'. They are the product, if not the process, of the various workings of the heart in detail. Moule suggests 'acts of mind'.

God's peace is thus to garrison not only the whole 'inner man' in general, but every motion of the will, every desire of the affections, and, in particular (as this phrase indicates), every action of the intelligence in thought and purpose. This is tranquillity indeed (cf. Is. xxvi. 3).

**In Christ Jesus]** He is the fortress in which the soul is guarded by God's peace,—the sacred citadel of holy rest. Outside, all is turmoil, trouble, and anxiety. In Him, all is joy and calm.

**8. Finally]** See note on iii. 1. According to one hypothesis, there noticed, the interrupted conclusion of the Epistle is herewith resumed.

**Brethren]** See notes on iii. 13, 17; iv. 1.

**Whatsoever things are true]** The Apostle now shows that the heart and thoughts of the Christian, while kept in Christ Jesus and guarded by God's peace, have yet full scope for exercise. There are fair meadows, full of flowers, over which we may roam at will. Boundaries there are indeed, but within them lies all that is really good and beautiful. Beyond them it is unsafe for the Christian's foot to tread or his mind to wander.

This verse, then, demarcates those regions of thought, feeling, and action, which are legitimate for the man who would live in the glad consciousness of God's favour and in the enjoyment of His peace. It will be seen that such an experience is circumscribed by eight great boundary lines. Bishop Lightfoot has pointed out that there is a sort of descending scale in the eight attributes here enumerated. He would describe the first pair 'true and honourable' as absolute qualities; the next pair 'just and pure' as relative virtues; the third pair 'lovely and of good report' as carrying man's moral approbation; and the last two 'virtue and praise' as appealing to lower motives and added as an after-thought. However this may be, we are surely to consider them as a consistent whole. It is not that one of them contradicts another, or allows a greater license than its predecessor. For example, what is 'lovely' must be also 'true' if it claims to find a place within God's boundary line; and, in the same way, what is 'praiseworthy' must be also 'just' and 'pure'.

**True]** That is, 'true' in the most absolute and comprehensive sense of the word. Truth must be the characteristic both of the *nature* and

5 Gr. *Take account of*- any virtue. and if there be any praise, <sup>5</sup> think on

the *actions* of all that seeks admission into this sacred circle. Truth in *being*, as well as truth in *speaking*, is intended here. Insincerity of any kind is fatal to true holiness. It is dangerous to allow our minds to dwell upon anything which is unreal and untrue, just as it is detrimental to permit ourselves to follow methods of casuistry in speech 'for the sake of argument'. Our wisdom and safety is to cleave only to that which is 'true' in our thinking, in our speaking, in our reading, and in our doing. The range of our thoughts, words, and deeds, however wide, must be confined by the border-line of truth. This attribute is set first because it is the basis of all the rest. Without truth, nothing can be regarded as 'just', or 'pure', or 'praiseworthy', from God's point of view.

In this country, we cannot insist too strongly on the paramount importance of truth. No one carries more respect in India than the man whose motives are known to be absolutely sincere and whose word can be fully relied upon.

**Honourable]** The word thus rendered signifies a quality which combines gravity and dignity in such a way as to invite 'reverence.' (See Trench's *Synonyms*).

It occurs again in 1 Tim. iii. 8, 11; Tit. ii. 2 (grave); in each case as connected with ministerial character; while the cognate noun is found in 1 Tim. ii. 2; iii. 4; Tit. ii. 7. It is the opposite of what is frivolous and mean. There is a holy gravity which becomes the Christian. Whatever is serious, sacred, venerable is thus seen to be a fitting subject for our thoughts and speech and actions. We are to avoid everything which is not worthy of honour and respect.

**Just]** Or 'righteous', both in the sight of God and man. Strict integrity must mark the Christian's character and life. Nothing that is wrong or crooked ought to be entertained in his mind, tolerated in his speech, or allowed in his conduct. 'For the Lord is righteous; He loveth righteousness' (Ps. xi. 7).

**Pure]** This word suggests the idea of shrinking from pollution of every kind. It describes what is pure and stainless, especially as regards abstention from unchastity and the sins of the flesh. It demands clean thoughts, clean words, clean deeds. It is found again in 2 Cor. vii. 11; xi. 2; 1 Tim. v. 22; Tit. ii. 5; Jas. iii. 17; 1 Pet. iii. 2; 1 Joh. iii. 3; while a noun derived from it occurs in 2 Cor. vi. 6; xi. 3.

Thus the fourth line with which God would circumscribe the hearts and lives of His people is that of holy chastity. Impurity of speech (not to speak of secret thoughts and actions) is sadly rife in many Indian homes. The minds of children are thus corrupted from their tenderest years.

9 these things. The things which ye both learned and received

Christians, at least, must set their faces firmly against the toleration of polluting words. We need to pay special attention, too, to the character of the books which we read, for much of the literature of the country is far from being good or pure.

**Lovely]** The only occurrence of this word in the New Testament. It means that which is 'pleasing', 'amiable', 'kindly', 'endearing'. 'The Christian is here reminded that his Master would have him attend to manner as well as matter in his life. Grace should make us gracious' (Moule).

We should seek to drink so deeply of the mind of Christ that our deportment, especially before non-Christians, may be attractive and gracious, and our looks, words, and actions may be marked by true courtesy.

**Of good report]** This word, also, is peculiar to this verse. Some understand it to mean 'fair-speaking', in the sense of kindly and winning speech. Others regard it as equivalent to 'high-toned', as dealing with lofty truths and noble principles. The rendering of the text gives it, however, a passive significance, 'things that are well spoken of'.

Moule paraphrases, so as to combine these various ideas, 'Things that are sweet to speak of, things prompting a loving and noble tone of conversation.' Our minds should be exercised only in such things as, when expressed in words, will appear noble and winsome and fair.

**If there be any virtue]** St. Paul here purposely changes the expression from 'whatsoever things are' to 'if there be any'. He seems to be, so to speak, making the range of thought and act allowed to the Christian as wide as actual holiness will permit. Beyond that, he cannot and he will not go.

**Virtue]** This is the favourite word in pagan ethics for 'moral excellence', but it is remarkable that St. Paul, who must have known it well, studiously ignores it except in this one passage. Probably this was because of its heathen associations, since it spoke, in their understanding of it, of self-reliance and not of self-denial. Their idea of 'virtue' was that of valorous deeds depending on self-help, while his was that of holiness depending on another and demanding the utmost humility.

Here, in this one verse, he gives it a place, as though to say, 'Whatever of real good is included in that old word "virtue", whatever it connotes of true moral excellence, on that also may your thoughts be rightly and profitably fixed'.

The word is used elsewhere only by St. Peter (1 Pet. ii. 9; 2 Pet. i. 3, 5), of the laudable glories of God on the one hand and of the Christian's

and heard and saw in me, these things do : and the God of peace shall be with you.

active and vigorous godliness on the other. This latter use of the word throws light on the idea probably present in St. Paul's mind when he wrote it here, that of 'active energy for what is right'. Whatever makes for vigorous morality is a legitimate object for our interests and plans.

**If there be any praise]** Here, again, he delimits the boundary of things lawful and useful with a wise hand. 'Whatever is well-pleasing to God, or rightly evokes praise and approval from the human conscience, let this also occupy your minds and influence your lives'. He is far from directing us to try and please men (Gal. i. 10). But he knows full well that what is true and right commends itself to the conscience of every man worthy of the name ; and, above all, he seeks the commendation of God ; for the usage of the word distinctly includes the divine approval.

The other passages in which it is found should be carefully studied and compared, in order to form a right conception of its Scripture meaning. They are Rom. ii. 29 ; xiii. 3 ; 1 Cor. iv. 5 ; 2 Cor. viii. 18 ; Eph. i. 6, 12, 14 ; Phil. i. 11 ; 1 Pet. i. 7 ; ii. 14.

**Think on these things]** Margin, 'Take account of these things'. The verb here employed is variously rendered in R. V. It is translated 'reason' in Mar. xi. 31 ; 'reckon' in Luke xxii. 37 ; Rom. ii. 3, 26 ; iv. 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24 ; vi. 11 ; viii. 18 ; ix. 8 ; 2 Cor. v. 19 ; x. 11 ; xi. 5 ; Gal. iii. 6 ; Jas. ii. 23 ; 'take account' in John xi. 50 ; 1 Cor. xiii. 5 ; 'account' in Acts xix. 27 ; Rom. viii. 36 ; xiv. 14 ; 1 Cor. iv. 1 ; 2 Cor. iii. 5 ; xii. 6 ; Heb. xi. 19 ; 1 Pet. v. 12 ; 'think' in 1 Cor. xiii. 11 ; Phil. iv. 8 ; 'consider' in 2 Cor. x. 7 ; 'count' in 2 Cor. x. 2 ; Phil. iii. 13 ; and 'lay to account' in 2 Tim. iv. 16.

It was primarily used of numerical calculations, but came to denote all kinds of logical reasoning and thinking. It carries the ideas here of accurate calculation, right estimation, and careful reasoning. In view of a liability to false doctrines (ch. iii), and a constant danger of self-assertion, disunion, and anxious care (iv. 1-6), it is essential to take right views of things, and to exercise the heart and thoughts in a discriminating sense and use of what is true and honourable and just and pure.

Conybeare and Howson, following the primary meaning of the verb translate 'Be such your treasures'. In this view, the Christian counts up all that is honourable and true, as his lawful possessions and repudiates all else beside.

Thus we see that God has drawn around the hearts and lives of His people an eight-fold boundary line. Within the limits of what is true and honourable and just and pure and morally lovely and high-toned

10      6 Gr. *Rejoiced*.      But I <sup>6</sup> rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now  
at length ye have revived your thought for me ;

and actively virtuous and praiseworthy before God and man, it is ours to think and speak and act.

Truly ours is a perfect Gospel, and its code of ethics could hardly be better summarized than in this one verse of Scripture. What makes the Christian position even more unique is that the *power* of the living Christ is given to us that we may live according to our code (see v. 13).

**9. The things which ye both learned]** That is, 'learned from me when I was with you in Philippi as your teacher.' Though it may also include lessons inculcated in the past by other Christian teachers too.

**And received]** 'Especially from me, as I "passed on" to you the truths which I had myself been taught.' This verb means 'to receive something from another'. St. Paul uses it eleven times (1 Cor. xi. 23; xv. 1, 3; Gal. i. 9, 12; Phil. iv. 9; Col. ii. 6; iv. 17; 1 Thes. ii. 13; iv. 1; 2 Thes. iii. 6). A study of these verses will show that the great missionary received his messages from the Lord Himself and then handed them on to others. This is the true method of Christian teaching.

**And heard]** By ear, from the Apostle's precepts. Or, perhaps also, heard by hearsay about his consistent conduct, when he was absent from them (cf. i. 30).

**And saw]** By eye, in St. Paul's conduct. They had ocular demonstration, in this way, of the reality of the Gospel. His practice exemplified his doctrine.

**In me]** That is, 'In my life and conduct'. The Apostle's daily walk was itself a sermon. The words are properly connected with the verb 'saw', but they may also be carried back to the previous verb 'heard'.

Is not an appeal to personal witness and experience, if it be true and honest, one of the most forcible of arguments? When the Hindus and Musalmans 'hear' and 'see' the Gospel in those who profess to have received it, the evangelization of India will be immensely accelerated.

**Do]** Better, 'Practise' (cf. John iii. 20, margin; v. 29, margin; Acts xix. 19; Rom. i. 32; ii. 1, 2, 3; vii. 15, 19; Gal. v. 21).

It means to do things as a habit, to carry them out in daily practice. Religion must always be brought to the test of practice. And India, perhaps of all lands, most needs applied religion.

If we Christians carried out in life all that we have learned and received and heard and seen, real godliness would be less uncommon.



<sup>7</sup> wherein ye did indeed take thought, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: <sup>11</sup>  
<sup>7</sup>Or, *seeing that*.

**And]** See first note on v. 7. The two clauses of this verse are hereby linked together, almost as cause and effect. If we practise what we have learned of the Gospel, then the God of peace will be with us.

**The God of peace]** In v. 7 we had 'the peace of God'; here, better still, we have 'the God of that (definite article in the original) peace' Himself. There we had the stream; here we have the source. As Bengel long ago observed, we enjoy 'Not only the peace of God, but God Himself'. If the peace-giver be with us, the peace is our's indeed.

This sweet phrase 'the God of peace' occurs six times in the New Testament, whilst once we find an interesting variation 'the Lord of peace'.

- (a) Rely on Him as your ever-present friend and the God of peace shall be with you. Rom. xv. 30, 33.
- (b) Be watchful and obedient and the God of peace shall be with you. Rom. xvi. 20.
- (c) Live in peace, and the God of peace shall be with you. (The God of love and peace). 2 Cor. xiii. 11.
- (d) Practise holiness, and the God of peace shall be with you. Phil. iv. 9.
- (e) Abstain from every form of evil and the Lord of peace shall be with you. 1 Thes. v. 22-3.
- (f) Be not weary in well doing and 'the Lord of peace' will be with you. 2 Thes. iii. 15-16.
- (g) Endure trials bravely and the God of peace shall be with you. Heb. xiii. 20.

In each case study the context and the circumstances of the Christians addressed.

All this shows clearly that 'peace' does not mean idleness; it is the true strength for active working; and only as we 'practise' what we know will 'the God of peace' be with us. *Peace* and *practice* go together.

How perfect is the 'peace' which He gives to the obedient Christian, 'peace at all times, in all ways' (2 Thes. iii. 16); and one various reading adds 'in every place'.

This great missionary was himself the object lesson to his people. The tenses of the verbs in this verse (Aorist) point specially to the time of his personal presence among them in the past. Notice, too, that while v. 8 defines the proper subjects for Christian *thinking*, v. 9 afford an example for Christian *acting*.

for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein

vv. 10-20. PERSONAL. HIS THANKFULNESS AND CONTENTMENT.

**10. But]** This conjunction seems to convey the idea that he may have seemed to some to have forgotten to acknowledge their kind gifts; but it is not really so, and he will hasten to make mention of them now.

It also marks the transition from the doctrinal to the personal, 'But,—to turn to another subject'. Cf. Rom. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. xvi. 15; Eph. vi. 21; 1 Thes. v. 12 for a similar use of the word in passing from one topic to another.

**I rejoice in the Lord]** Literally, 'I rejoiced in the Lord.' The rendering of the text regards the verb as an epistolary Aorist (see note on ii. 25). But it is open to regard it as having the ordinary Aorist force, and as referring to the actual time when he received their contributions; indeed this seems preferable.

He has twice or thrice bidden the Philippians to 'Rejoice in the Lord' (iii. 1; iv. 4; and see notes there and on iv. 2). Here he is seen to practise himself what he preaches to others.

**Greatly]** It is remarkable that this is the only New Testament passage in which this adverb occurs, though the corresponding adjective is so common. If we do nothing else 'greatly', at least let us 'rejoice greatly'.

**Now at length]** This expression is found again in Rom. i. 10. Its force is 'Now, after the lapse of so long a time'.

**Ye have revived]** This verb, peculiar to the present passage, means really 'to put forth fresh shoots', like the branch of a fruit tree.

The tense (Aorist) points back to the actual time when they collected and despatched to him their contributions, 'You (then) shot forth the fresh blossoms of kindly thought for me'.

Bengel thinks that they had sent Epaphroditus in the spring time, when the trees were breaking out anew into bud and blossom, and that this metaphor was suggested by that fact. But this, though an ingenious suggestion, hardly suits the date (Introd. III).

In any case, the simile is a beautiful and truly poetical one, and shows the culture and courtesy of the Apostle's mind. Christians are 'the trees of the Lord' (Ps. i. 3; civ. 16; Is. lxi. 3); and, under another figure, branches of the vine (John xv. 5). They should, therefore, ever be shooting forth new blossoms and fruit. And not the least fair of all such fragrant blossoms is loving thoughtfulness for others.

**Your thought for me]** This is the object of the verb and so denotes the thing germinated. It reads literally, 'Your thinking on my behalf,'

to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know also how **12** to abound : in everything and in all things have I learned the

where the verb 'think' (mind) is the same as recurs constantly in this Epistle (Introd. VI). The 'mind of thoughtful sympathy', in this case, took shape in money contributions for God's work, as carried on by His Apostle.

Our thoughtful care for others must show itself in deeds as well as words (Jas. ii. 15, 16) ; and our interest in the welfare of our Church and in the evangelization of the heathen must be evinced by liberal gifts, to the extent of real self-denial.

**Wherein ye did indeed take thought]** The Apostle's gentle courtesy will not allow him to write what may be understood by some as veiled rebuke without at once hastening to remove any such possible impression. He gracefully acknowledges their good intentions as well as their actual gifts.

It means literally 'With a view to which (i.e., satisfying my wants and so helping on God's work) ye were indeed all along taking thought' (imperfect tense).

Conybeare and Howson paraphrase, 'Though your care indeed never failed.'

**But ye lacked opportunity]** The words 'ye-lacked-opportunity' represent one Greek verb, found only in this passage in the New Testament. An adverb, however, from the same root occurs in 2 Tim. iv. 2 (out of season).

How lovingly considerate St. Paul is in his way of putting it ! Whether they were short of means for some time, or had no suitable messenger to send, or found it impossible to communicate with the prisoner till after his arrival at Rome, or whatever the reason may have been, it is all covered by his kindly phrase, 'Ye lacked opportunity'.

**11. Not that I speak in respect of want]** The expression 'not that' occurs again in this Epistle in iii. 12 ; iv. 17. It is a phrase used for the purpose of avoiding misapprehension (Winer, page 746).

**In respect of want]** i.e., 'in consequence of suffering want'. His language in writing the preceding words was not dictated by pressing needs.

This word 'want' occurs again only in Mark. xii. 44, of the widow's great penury.

**For I]** There is stress on the 'I', as though to say 'I at least am living a contented life. Let others do so too'.

**Have learned]** The verb is in the Aorist 'I learned' (in the past). Possibly it refers to some epoch of special privation, or to the period of time which had elapsed between their earlier and later contributions.

secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to

**In whatsoever state I am]** Literally, 'In what (things) I am', i.e., 'in my actual circumstances'. How many Christians complain of their circumstances and blame them for their failures!

**To be content]** The primary meaning of this word is 'self-sufficient', and so independent of external circumstances, 'having enough'. The Stoic philosophers laid great stress on this as a virtue. The adjective occurs only in this verse, but the cognate noun is found in 2 Cor. ix. 8, 1 Tim. vi. 6; both interesting references.

The Christian is thus 'content' or 'self-contained' in the sense of carrying with him, in Christ, all that he needs, so that he does not depend for happiness on his environment. Christ has come to replace that old 'self' of his, and so, in this new sense, he is indeed 'self-sufficient', since Christ is his sufficiency. (cf. 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6.)

**12. To be abased]** Cf. for the same verb, Matt. xxiii. 12; Luke iii. 5; xiv. 11; xviii. 14; Jas. iv. 10; 1 Pet. v. 6.

These references appear to fix the sense here as 'to be humbled', to be down low', with a consciousness of unworthiness and need. 'I know how to bear humiliation'.

Moule, however, understands it as meaning 'to be low' in resources and comforts, and he refers to the fact that the word is used sometimes in the Greek classics, of a river running low.

**To abound]** A favourite word of St. Paul's. He has already used it in i. 9, 26, and uses it again in this verse, as also in v. 18. See note on i. 26.

Probably the contributions of the Philippians had brought about such a season of 'abundance.'

It is just as great a secret to know how to bear abundance as it is to know how to endure abasement. Prosperity often brings more danger to the soul than adversity.

**In everything and in all things]** That is, 'in every circumstance, considered separately; and in all circumstances, considered collectively.

'In the details and in the total' (Moule).

For the phrase 'in everything', see note on v. 6.

'In all things'. Compare a group of texts in which these words occur.

(a) Faithful in all things. 1 Tim. iii. 11.

(b) Having understanding in all things. 2 Tim. ii. 7.

(c) Being sober in all things. 2 Tim. iv. 5.

(d) Well pleasing in all things. Tit. ii. 9.

(e) Adorning the Gospel in all things. Tit. ii. 10.

(f) Living honestly in all things. Heb. xiii. 18.

(g) Glorifying God in all things. 1 Pet. iv. 11.

(h) Content and satisfied in all things. (here).

be in want. I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me. 13

**Have I learned the secret]** This verb 'to learn the secret' is found only here in the New Testament. It is the technical term used of a person's being 'initiated into mysteries'. From the same root, which means to close or shut (as the eyes or mouth), comes our word mystery. Systems of religious mysteries, into which people were initiated by special rites, date from very early times, and were prevalent, in their turn, among the Greeks. The esoteric secrets connected with those systems were known only to those so initiated, and were carefully kept from outsiders. We have a modern counterpart in the Order of Freemasons.

In the New Testament the word mystery, has been adopted to signify 'a secret once hid from view but now revealed to believers in the Gospel'. (See e.g., Matt. xiii. 11; Eph. iii. 3; vi. 19; Col. i. 26, 27; 1 Tim. iii. 16).

The Apostle Paul had been initiated into this open secret of Christian contentment.

**To be filled]** The word means 'to be fed to satiety.' It was originally used of feeding cattle, but gradually lost its first meaning and became applied to men. Its force of 'full fed' will appear by reference to the following texts in which it is employed; Matt. v. 6; xiv. 20; xv. 33, 37; Mark vii. 27; Luke xv. 16; xvi. 21; Jas. ii. 16; Rev. xix. 21.

**To be hungry]** St. Paul had known the pangs of 'hunger' (1 Cor. iv. 11). So had his master (Matt. iv. 2; xxi. 18).

The verb is cognate to the noun which is found in v. 11. To be equally satisfied in repletion and in depletion, in abundance and in want—to be always equable, happy, content, this is indeed a secret of life worth learning.

Surely this doctrine of contentment (cf. 1 Tim. vi. 6-8) cuts at the root of that habit of running into debt which is so sadly prevalent among the people of India, and even among Christians. With Rom. xiii. 8 before us, how can we possibly justify the incurring of debt in order to make large expenditures over marriages, or to 'keep up a position', or to acquire lands, or to educate our children beyond our means? St. Paul had learned a secret which the Indian Church will do well to lay to heart. He was satisfied with his income, fluctuating though it was; and he lived accordingly. He was self-sufficient in that he placed full confidence in God to provide for all his needs; and *he never went into debt.*

**13. I can do all things]** This glorious verse reads literally thus, 'For all things I am strong in Him who enableth me.'

The verb means 'to be strong' with the strength of ability, the strength which prevails. For its usage in the New Testament study, e.g., Mark ix. 18; Luke xiii. 24; xiv. 29, 30; xx. 26; John xxi. 6; Acts vi. 10; xix. 16, 20; Jas. v. 16.

## 14 Howbeit ye did well, that ye had fellowship with my affliction.

We see the Apostle 'strong in the strength which God supplies', cheerfully facing any concurrence of circumstances or combination of difficulties which may arise, in the glad consciousness that he can successfully cope with them and prevail. Be it 'fighting with beasts at Ephesus' (1 Cor. xv. 32), or patiently enduring 'the stake in the flesh' (2 Cor. xii. 7-10), the God-given strength is all-sufficient. The recurrence of the expression 'all things' in this Epistle is remarkable (ii. 14; iii. 8, 21; iv. 13, 18).

With this verse before us, the possibilities of progress and victory in the Christian's life and work are unlimited. He 'can do all things', which are the will of God for him.

**In Him that strengtheneth me]** For the active use, in other passages, of this verb 'enableth', see 1 Tim. i. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 17, where Christ is represented as 'infusing power' into His servant for the work of the ministry in the one case, and for the stress of a great trial in the other.

The same verb is found, though not in the active voice, in Acts ix. 22; Rom. iv. 20; Eph. vi. 10; 2 Tim. ii. 1; Heb. xi. 34.

The idea of the verse is this. God supernaturally imparts His divine power (enableth, empowereth) to the Christian who sincerely trusts Him; and that power finds expression in the strength which avails for 'all things'. In other words, the 'strength' is the putting forth of the 'power'. It is 'the action of the faculty' (Moule). But it is all 'in Him', and is procurable in no other way (John xv. 5).

There must be the constant maintenance of vital union with Christ if this power is to be infused.

**14. Howbeit]** The same particle as in i. 18; and iii. 16 (only). The Apostle's sensitive care for the feelings of the Philippians again shows itself. While he finds all-sufficiency in Christ, he can yet lovingly acknowledge and appreciate the friendship and assistance of His people.

**Ye did well]** The phrase 'to do well' will be found again in Matt. xii. 12; Mark vii. 37; Luke vi. 27; Acts x. 33; Jas. ii. 8, 19. A study of these passages will show us God's idea of true beneficence. The reference here, of course, is to their despatch of loving gifts to him.

**That ye had fellowship with my affliction]** Cf. note on i. 7 where the cognate noun occurs. This verb is found again only in Eph. v. 11; Rev. xviii. 4; and in both those passages it is used of a forbidden 'taking part' in the sins of others. Here it denotes a united participation in St. Paul's afflictions, in the sense of sympathy and substantial help.

The simpler verb 'to partake of', from which this one is compounded is used in Rom. xii. 13; xv. 27; Gal. vi. 6; Phil. iv. 15; 1 Tim. v. 22;

And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the be- **15**  
ginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no

Heb. ii. 14; 1 Pet. iv. 13; 2 John 11; and in the first three of these references pecuniary assistance is again in view.

The particular construction employed here would indicate that the Philippians went 'into partnership', so to speak, with the Apostle's 'affliction', in the sense of making common cause with it and relieving it. Money gifts are in prominent view, but the thought includes the loving sympathy and friendship which prompted those gifts.

This verse teaches us that our sympathy must be practical. We need to display more of that real fellowship and fellow-feeling which will minister to the sick and needy, not only in the way of prayer and exhortation, but also in very practical directions. How many Christians, for example, think of sweeping the house for sick friends, or drawing water from the well for them, or looking after their children?

And, assuredly, we need more of that Christian liberality which gives till it costs us something. The man who professes much piety and yet gives sparingly of his means for God's work will find no encouragement for so un-Christian an attitude in these verses.

The word 'affliction' has already occurred in this Epistle, in i. 17 (which see).

**15. And ye yourselves also know]** Literally, 'But ye yourselves, etc.' The force of the particle is 'But I hardly need assure you that I am not unwilling to accept your loving gifts; neither would I convey the notion that your latest contributions were necessary to assure me of your sympathy. That sympathy has been proved beforetimes again and again, as you well remember and as I have good cause to know'.

**Philippians]** See note on the title of the Epistle. The word used both there and here, 'Philippeans', is the form by which the settlers in a Roman colony would naturally designate themselves. Thus it carries the idea of their colonial status with it.

**In the beginning of the Gospel]** Meaning, of course, 'in the early days of the evangelization of your country'. Cf. note on v. 3 (in the Gospel).

The word 'Gospel' practically means here 'the spread of the Gospel'.

**When I departed from Macedonia]** This expression, in the Greek, may indicate either the actual time of his departure from Macedonia or the period which followed such departure. Possibly it covers both. We know that contributions were sent to him while he was in Corinth (2 Cor. xi. 8, 9), i.e., after he had passed from Macedonia in northern Greece to Achaia in southern Greece. And it is not impossible that contributions may have been conveyed to him through those who accompanied him

church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and  
 16 receiving, but ye only ; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once

from Macedonia to Athens (Acts xvii. 14, 15), and so given to him as he was passing the border between the two provinces. For the history of those days, ten years previous to this, see Acts xvii.

**Had fellowship with me]** See note on v. 14, This is the simpler form of the verb referred to in that verse.

**Giving and receiving]** This is a phrase from commercial life, corresponding to our 'credit and debit', the two sides of an account.

The 'giving' (a word found again in the New Testament only in Jas. i. 17, see margin) denotes the action of the Philippians in bestowing the contributions.

The 'receiving' (a word peculiar to this one verse) indicates the action of the Apostle in accepting them.

**Ye only]** Cf. 2 Cor. xi. 7-9. Bengel points out that it was open to them to say that they would give if other Churches gave, but that they chose a more excellent way and so received a special meed of praise. It does not follow, however, that St. Paul is casting blame on others by way of contrast. He is merely engaged in gracefully appreciating the generosity of the Philippians who gave so readily, though they made themselves singular in so giving. We should do what moral obligation prompts us to do, irrespective of the example and conduct of others, and certainly not in a spirit of mere emulation.

**16. Even in Thessalonica]** His very next centre of work after leaving Philippi (Acts xvii. 1), only about ninety miles away, and in the same province of Macedonia. They did not delay help till he had gone to strange and distant regions. *Bis dat qui cito dat*, is a Latin proverb, meaning 'he gives twice over, who gives quickly'.

**Ye sent once and again]** Thessalonica lay on the great Egnatian Road and so was readily accessible from Philippi.

A reference to 1 Thes. ii. 9 ; iv. 11 ; 2 Thes. iii. 8-11 shows that he had purposely avoided receiving assistance from the Thessalonians, and thus the Philippian contributions enabled him to carry on the work there without great restriction from lack of means. His stay there was short (Acts xvii. 1-10), a few weeks at the most, but they managed in that brief space of time to send him subsidies more than once. The expression 'once and again' occurs, elsewhere, only in 1 Thes. ii. 18.

**Unto my need]** That is, 'To supply my wants'. He has already used the same word 'need' in ii. 25, and it follows again in v. 19. Gratitude is a virtue which Christians ought to cultivate more than they do.



and again unto my need. Not that I seek for the gift ; but I <sup>17</sup>  
 seek for the fruit that increaseth to your account. But I have <sup>18</sup>

St. Paul was grateful for the smallest kindness shown him by others. But it is not an uncommon thing to find those the most ungrateful who have received the greatest benefits. In this country, above all other mission fields, we have received special help from Christian lands and peculiar educational advantages. Let the Indian Church shine forth before the world as a Church showing forth singular gratitude to God by fervent devotion to His service and by strenuous efforts to pass on the Gospel to the 'regions beyond'.

**17. Not that]** See note on v. 11. Here the phrase deprecates the possibility of their thinking that, in so warmly thanking them, he is actuated by 'a keen sense of future favours'. A high-souled man like St. Paul shrank from the very semblance of seeking pecuniary help. It was for their sakes, rather than his own, that he valued their gift.

**I seek for]** The verb is a compound one, having a preposition prefixed which gives the idea of eagerness in the search. It thus means 'to seek after anything with a keen and eager search'. It is the word, e.g., used in Matt. vi. 32 ; xii. 39 ; Acts xii. 19 ; Rom. xi. 7 ; Heb. xi. 14 ; xiii. 14. 'Not that I am hunting for your gift'. The money itself, in his eyes, was a mere nothing. Lightfoot rightly elucidates the force of the repetition of the verb in this verse 'I do not want the gift ; but I do want fruit that shall be put to the credit of your account.'

**The gift]** This word is only found again in Matt. vii. 11 ; Luke xi. 13 ; Eph. iv. 8. A reference to these texts will show that this 'gift' of the Philippians' alms comes, so to speak, in the best of company.

**The fruit that increaseth to your account]** Lightfoot paraphrases, 'The recompense which is placed to your account, and increases with each fresh demonstration of your love'. This expresses the sense of the Greek perfectly.

Moule, following St. Chrysostom's comment on this text, renders it, 'The interest that is accumulating to your account', understanding the word 'fruit' to be here practically synonymous with 'interest.'

**Increaseth]** The verb so translated occurs again in Rom. v. 20 ; vi. 1 ; 2 Cor. iv. 15 ; viii. 15 ; 1 Thes. iii. 12 ; 2 Thes. i. 3 ; 2 Pet. i. 8, and is ordinarily rendered 'abound'. Its sense here clearly is 'accumulate'.

**18. But]** Even while he earnestly desires that their spirit of liberality may continue to manifest itself, for their own good, he is anxious once more to avoid the very appearance of self-seeking.

all things, and abound : I am filled, having received from Epaphroditus the things *that came* from you, an odour of a sweet

The series of deprecatory particles in the whole passage is remarkable ; 'not that' (v. 11) : 'but' (v. 15) ; 'not that' (v. 17) : 'but' (v. 18).

**I have]** The verb means 'I have to the full'. Cf. its use in Matt. vi. 2, 5, 16 ; Luke vi. 24 (have received) ; Philem. 15.

Like the word 'content' (v. 11), this was also a favourite word among the Stoics.

It should be noticed, too, that it was used by the Greeks of money payments, to express a full receipt. So that it may here carry the meaning 'I have received from you payment to the full, in all respects. Your debt of love and gratitude to me is more than discharged'.

**All things]** See note on v. 13.

**And abound]** 'It is not merely that I have all things to the full ; but I am actually running over'. See note on same word in v. 12. Conybeare and Howson paraphrase, 'I have all which I require, and more than I require.'

**I am filled]** He seems to pile word upon word to express the superabundance of his satisfaction and contentment.

'I have been filled full' would better express the force of the Greek. See note on i. 11 ; and cf. John xvi. 24 ; xvii. 13 ; Rom. xv. 14 ; 2 Cor. vii. 4 ; and, especially, Col. ii. 10, for the same word.

The special meaning here seems to be 'My wants have been fully supplied'.

**Epaphroditus]** See notes on ii. 25, 30. Here we have it explicitly stated that he was the bearer of their contributions.

**The things (that came) from you]** He instinctively avoids using the word money. Bengel thinks that gifts in kind and clothes were included ; but the love and sympathy and friendship and gratitude represented by their presents are, probably, also intended. They were the most acceptable tokens of all, lying behind the other gifts and prompting them.

**An odour of a sweet smell]** This expression occurs again in Eph. v. 2, and is quoted from the LXX where it is the equivalent of the Hebrew 'reach nicho'ach' (savour of rest). See Gen. viii. 21 ; Ex. xxix. 18 ; Lev. i. 9, 13, 17. It is used of all the greater sacrifices of the Mosaic law, and is a poetical representation, in type, of the glad satisfaction which God finds in the adoring worship and willing service of His people, when rendered sincerely through the merits of Lord Jesus Christ.

smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God. And my **19** God shall fulfil every need of yours according to his riches in

The usage of the word, therefore, suggests that this gift of the Philippians to God's servant was a little proof of their having surrendered themselves, as a whole burnt-offering, with all their possessions, to the service of their Redeemer. It also savours of the 'peace-offering' of thanksgiving.

'Odour'. This word is found in four other verses.

- (a) The odour of the woman's ointment. John xii. 3.
- (b) The odour of the knowledge of Christ. 2 Cor. ii. 14.
- (c) The odour of death unto death and life unto life. 2 Cor. ii. 16.
- (d) The odour of Christ's sacrifice. Eph. v. 2.
- (e) The odour of loving gifts. (here).

**Sweet smell**] This occurs only, outside this verse, in 2 Cor. ii. 15; Eph. v. 2; in the former of 'the sweet savour of Christ', and in the latter, as here, of the sweetness of the odour of the sacrifice. One word 'fragrance' would well express it.

**A sacrifice**] Whether regarded as the whole burnt-offering of consecration (Lev. i. 9); of the 'meal offering' of holy character (Lev. ii. 9); or the 'peace offering' of thanksgiving (Lev. iii. 5); or all combined.

The word 'sacrifices' has been already used in ii. 17. The 'spiritual sacrifices' of the Gospel (1 Pet. ii. 5) are

- (a) The sacrifice of entire self-consecration. Rom. xii. 1.
- (b) The sacrifice of praise and confession. Heb. xiii. 15.
- (c) The sacrifice of good deeds and gifts for God's service. Heb. xiii. 16.

With the third of these, the present passage is specially connected.

**Acceptable**] The word is found again in Luke iv. 19, 24; Acts x. 35; 2. Cor. vi. 2. It conveys the idea of 'accepted by' God.

**Well pleasing**] This occurs, in all, in nine passages. We may here classify them as mentioning six things well pleasing to God.

- (a) Consecration, Rom. xii. 1, marg. (b) Service, Rom. xiv. 18.
- (c) True Ministers, 2 Cor. v. 9. (d) Good conduct, Eph. v. 10; Heb. xiii. 21.
- (e) Obedience, Col. iii. 20; Tit. ii. 9. (f) Sacrifice, Phil. iv. 18.

While, in Rom. xii. 2, margin, it is used of the will of God as being 'well pleasing' to the believer. Notice how practical true religion is in all its details and in all its applications.

**19. And**] Literally, 'But'. The force of the particle probably is, 'I cannot recompense you. But my Lord and Master will do it for me'.

**My God**] See note on i. 3. In addition to the strong personal grasp on God which it expresses, the 'my' seems also to carry here the force of 'on my behalf'.

20 *s Gr. unto the  
ages of the ages* glory in Christ Jesus. Now unto our God and Father be the glory <sup>s</sup> for ever and ever. Amen.

**Shall fulfil]** Or 'fill up'. It is the same verb which occurred in the previous verse 'I am filled'. He writes 'Your gifts fully supplied *my* needs; and now, on my behalf, my God shall fully supply *your* needs'.

**Every need of yours]** Here again the word 'need' of v. 16 is taken up and repeated. The Macedonian converts were not, as a body, rich (2 Cor. viii. 2). Out of their 'deep poverty' they contributed to the spread of the Gospel. It is not improbable, then, that the recent gifts of the Philippians had left a real gap in their resources; they may have been left in circumstances of 'need', for they had given up to their power 'yea! and beyond their power.' But God will fill the void, and more than fill it. Their void shall not remain a void. Observe, too, the force of the word 'every', it is all-inclusive, and leaves no actual want unsatisfied, physical or spiritual.

**According to His riches in glory]** Here we have the manner and measure and standard of His supply. (See note on iii. 21).

The meaning is, apparently, 'On the scale of His riches which consist in, and are contained in, His glory, the glory of His own manifested attributes of perfect power and love and grace'. The shekinah was the symbol of that 'glory' in the Old Testament; our Lord Jesus Christ is the embodiment of it in the New.

Moule's paraphrase brings out the sense of the passage clearly; 'Yes! He will draw on no less a treasury than that of His "glory", His own nature of almighty Love, as it is manifested to and for you "in Christ Jesus," in whom "all the fulness" dwells.'

Conybeare and Howson have 'In the fulness of His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.'

Lightfoot would, however, connect the words 'in glory' directly with the verb 'shall fulfil', and so refer the whole to the future bliss of heaven, 'By placing you in glory'. St. Paul is fond of using the word 'riches' in connexion with God's attributes and gifts. See Rom. ii. 4; x. 23; x. 12; xi. 12, 33; 1 Cor. i. 5; 2 Cor. viii. 9; ix. 11; Eph. i. 7, 18; iii. 4, 7; iii. 8, 16; Col. i. 27; ii. 2.

**In Christ Jesus]** This locates both the 'glory' and the 'riches'. If we are 'in Him', then ours is all the wealth which is stored up in Him; cf. Col. i. 19; ii. 9, 10; Joh. i. 16. In Christ is 'peace' (v. 7); and in Him is 'glory' too (v. 19).

**20. Now unto our God and Father]** The Apostle characteristically breaks out, after a glimpse of the 'riches' of his Lord, into a doxology

Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are 21<sup>v</sup>

of praise. A sight of the 'glory' (v. 19) sets him singing this 'Gloria' (v. 20). In v. 19 it was '*my* God.' Here is it '*our* God,' for he unites the Philippians with himself in this solemn act of adoration. Notice that the 'rich' God is our 'Father'.

Bengel truly says 'The doxology flows out of the joy of the whole Epistle.'

**The glory]** See notes on i. 11; ii. 11. '*The glory*,' that which is pre-eminently His and belongs to Him alone. In such doxologies the definite article is usually, as here, prefixed. Cf. Rom. xi. 36; xvi. 27; Gal. i. 5; Eph. iii. 21; 2 Tim. iv. 18; Heb. xiii. 21; 2 Pet. iii. 18; Rev. vii. 12, marg. It includes the adoring praise offered to Him by His people for every manifestation of His power and grace. This Epistle has been rich in such manifestations.

**For ever and ever]** Literally 'To the ages of the ages'. It is a phrase found again in the doxologies of 1 Tim. i. 17; 2 Tim. iv. 18; Heb. xiii. 21; 1 Pet. iv. 11; and eleven times in the Apocalypse (i. 6; i. 18; iv. 10; v. 13; vii. 12; x. 6; xi. 15; xiv. 11; xv. 7; xix. 3; xx. 10; xxii. 5).

It conveys the idea of cycles on cycles of duration following each other *ad infinitum*.

**Amen]** A Hebrew word meaning 'surely', from a root denoting faithfulness. It is found in the Old Testament, Num. v. 22; Deut. xxvii. 15-26; 1 Kings i. 36; 1 Chr. xvi. 36; Neh. v. 13; viii. 6; Ps. xli. 13; lxxii. 19; lxxxix. 52; cvi. 48; Isaiah lxv. 16; Jer. xi. 5; xxviii. 6. It has been adopted in the New Testament and passed into current use in the Christian Church. The word breathes great certainty, '*So may* it be; so it *shall* be; so it *is*.'

#### vv. 21-23. CLOSING SALUTATION.

**21. Salute]** The same imperative is found in Rom. xvi. 3-16 (16 times); 2 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 Thes. v. 26; Heb. xiii. 24; 1 Pet. v. 14.

**Every saint]** St. Paul's own enumeration in Rom. xvi. 3-16 is a good illustration. Each one is to be greeted in person. Saintship is an individual, personal thing. For 'saint' see note on i. 1.

**In Christ Jesus]** This may be taken in direct connexion either with the verb 'salute,' or with the noun 'saint'. If the former, it will read 'Salute in Christ Jesus every saint' (cf. Rom. xvi. 22; 1 Cor. xvi. 19).

Both thoughts are true. Our saintship is in Christ Jesus; let our greetings be in Him too. Notice the constant recurrence of the phrase 'in Christ Jesus' (i. 1, 26; ii. 5; iii. 3, 14; iv. 7, 19).

22 with me salute you. All the saints salute you, especially they that are of Cæsar's household.

**The brethren which are with me]** Cf. Gal. i. 2. This probably means St. Paul's personal companions and fellow-missionaries, the choice inner circle of his special friends. We think of Luke (Col. iv. 14; Philem. 24); Timothy (Phil. i. 1; ii. 19); Aristarchus (Col. iv. 10; Philem. 24); Tychicus (Eph. vi. 21; Col. iv. 7); Epaphras (Col. i. 7; iv. 12); Mark (Col. iv. 10; Philem. 24); Jesus Justus (Col. iv. 11); Onesimus (Col. iv. 9; Philem. 10); Epaphroditus (Phil. ii. 25). Many of these, in all probability, were gathered round him in his Roman chamber as he penned the Letter, and sent their loving greetings to Philippi.

**Salute you]** Such affectionate messages are natural, and are customary in the Epistles. Cf. Rom. xvi. 16, 21-23; 1 Cor. xvi. 19, 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 13; Col. iv. 10, 12, 14; etc.

**22. All the saints]** This represents a wider circle, the whole Christian community at Rome, who sent their loving greetings as a Church. Individual believers at Philippi were in view in v. 21, here the entire Body of believers at Rome is classed together. For 'saints,' see note on i. 1.

**Especially]** The original has 'But especially.' One class of Christians is singled out of the rest as sending greetings of special warmth.

**They that are of Cæsar's household]** There is nothing in this expression itself to limit it either to imperial officers of rank on the one hand or to slaves and menial servants on the other. It denotes the entire class of the Emperor's retainers, high and low alike, even including persons who might now be in distant provinces, either on actual duty or residing there on other business.

Bishop Lightfoot, after investigating the matter thoroughly and weighing carefully evidence derived from burial inscriptions (which comprise names mentioned in Rom. xvi, e.g., Amplias, Urbanus, Apelles, Tryphæna, Tryphosa, Patrobas, Philologus) arrived at the following deductions, all possessing a considerable degree of probability.

- (a) That the believers greeted in Rom. xvi. are, on the whole, those referred to in this verse.
- (b) That they were Christians before St. Paul's residence in Rome which fact would account also for their being apparently known by repute to the Philippians.
- (c) That the households of Aristobulus and Narcissus (Rom. xvi. 10, 11) were the slave-establishments respectively of Herod the Great's son Aristobulus and of the emperor Claudius' rich favourite Narcissus; these establishments having been transferred to Cæsar on account of circumstances. It was customary

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. 23

for households so transferred to retain the name of their former master.

(d) That those 'of Cæsar's household' here referred to were, therefore, in all likelihood, slaves and freedmen attached to the palace.

Whatever the particular offices filled by these retainers of the Roman Cæsar, and some of them may have been very humble, at least it is interesting to find the power of the Gospel thus at work among a class of men who must have been exposed to peculiar temptations. The atmosphere of a corrupt heathen court was not the most congenial to the maintenance of real spiritual life; but here we see Christian saints among the retainers of the royal house, whether slaves or freedmen, some of them, most probably, carrying the fragrance of the Gospel with them into the interior of the palace itself.

**23. The grace of the Lord]** See note on i. 2. St. Paul's Epistles all *begin* and *end* with '*grace*'. See Rom. i. 7; xvi. 20; 1 Cor. i. 3; xvi. 23; 2 Cor. i. 2; xiii. 14; Gal. i. 3; vi. 18; Eph. i. 2; vi. 24; Phil. i. 2; iv. 23; Col. i. 2; iv. 18; 1 Thes. i. 1; v. 28; 2 Thes. i. 2; iii. 18; 1 Tim. i. 2; vi. 21; 2 Tim. i. 2; iv. 22; Tit. i. 4; iii. 15; Philem. 3, 25. In most cases, too, 'peace' as well as 'grace' is found both in the opening and closing sections.

**The Lord Jesus Christ]** Notice the full title of Him who is held up to view as the source and fountain of '*grace*'. Cf. note on iii. 20. He is *the Lord*, with His Divine power; *Jesus*, with His saving grace; and *the Christ*, with His official perfection.

**With your spirit]** So also in Gal. vi. 18; Philem. 25.

The 'spirit' is the highest part of man's tri-partite nature, and that through which '*grace*' acts to dominate the soul and body. Cf. 1 Thes. v. 23.

Here, there is no doctrine of absorption into the Supreme Being; but a glorious revelation of the fact that the living God so freely imparts His grace to the human spirit that, by the power of that grace ever present in energizing action, our spirit is quickened, strengthened, and enabled for a life of joyful holiness and triumphant service.

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